BRITISH COLUMBIA

# REPORT ON THE BUDGET 2007 CONSULTATIONS

SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

FIRST REPORT

SECOND SESSION, THIRTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

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**Office of the Clerk of Committees**
**SELECT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

Location:
**Room 224, Parliament Buildings**
**Victoria, British Columbia**
**V8V 1X4**

Telephone: **(250) 356-2933**

Toll free at: **1-877-428-8337**

Fax: **(250) 356-8172**

Email: **FinanceCommittee@leg.bc.ca**

Internet Homepage:
This report and others are available at our Internet Homepage which also contains further information about this and other Select Standing and Special Committees: **http://www.leg.bc.ca/cmt**

November 15, 2006

To the Honourable
Legislative Assembly of the
Province of British Columbia
Victoria, British Columbia

Honourable Members:

I have the honour to present herewith the First Report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for the Second Session of the Thirty-Eighth Parliament.

The First Report covers the work of the Committee on the Budget 2007 Consultations.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Blair Lekstrom, MLA
Chair

2007-01590/

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# Composition of the Committee

## Members

Chair:
Blair Lekstrom, MLA
*Peace River South*

Deputy Chair:
Bruce Ralston, MLA
*Surrey-Whalley*

Iain Black, MLA
*Port Moody-Westwood*

Harry Bloy, MLA
*Burquitlam*

Randy Hawes, MLA
*Maple Ridge-Mission*

Dave S. Hayer, MLA
*Surrey-Tynehead*

John Horgan, MLA
*Malahat-Juan de Fuca*

Jenny Wai Ching Kwan, MLA
*Vancouver-Mount Pleasant*

Richard T. Lee, MLA
*Burnaby North*

Bob Simpson, MLA
*Cariboo North*

## Clerks to the Committee

Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Clerk Assistant and Committee Clerk

Anne Stokes, Committee Clerk

## Committee Researchers

Jonathan Fershau, Committee Research Analyst

Mary Storzer, Committee Researcher

Geneviève Murray, Committee Researcher

Simon Gray-Schleihauf, Committee Researcher

Annette Pryzgoda, Committee Researcher

## Terms of Reference

On February 20, 2006, the Legislative Assembly agreed that the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services be empowered:

To examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to the pre-budget consultation report prepared by the Minister of Finance in accordance with section 2 of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* and, in particular, to:

(a) Conduct public consultations across British Columbia on proposals and recommendations regarding the provincial budget and fiscal policy for the coming fiscal year by any means the committee considers appropriate, including but not limited to public meetings, telephone and electronic means;
(b) Prepare a report no later than November 15, 2006 on the results of those consultations; and

In addition to the powers previously conferred upon the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, the committee shall be empowered:

(a) to appoint of their number one or more subcommittees and refer to such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the committee;
(b) to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned and during any sitting of the House;
(c) to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient; and
(d) to retain personnel as required to assist the committee,

and shall report to the House as soon as possible, or following any adjournment or at the next following session, as the case may be, to deposit the original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly.

# Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to express its appreciation to everyone who assisted in our work. In particular, we would like to thank the record number of British Columbians who took the time to contribute their ideas to the Committee's budget consultation process. We would like to acknowledge the significance of their contributions to our work.

The Committee would also like thank the people at Hansard Services for their expertise and professionalism in producing the transcripts of our meetings. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the contribution of Wendy Collisson, Adam Wang, Alison Braid-Skolski, Mike Leblond, Rob Froese, Graham Caverhill, and Doug Baker who traveled with us to the public hearings.

In addition, we recognize the valuable services provided by the Legislative Assembly Computer Systems Branch. Many thanks to Daren Parfitt of Computer Systems for designing the Committee's webpage and developing software solutions for analyzing the data collected.

We would also like to thank the staff from the Office of the Clerk of Committees. Mary Newell, Jacqueline Quesnel, Dorothy Jones, Tamara Checknita, and Keli Sandford provided excellent assistance in advertising the Committee's work, booking witnesses, logging submissions, handling travel arrangements, and staffing the information desk. Jonathan Fershau, our Research Analyst, provided research support throughout the process with the assistance of Mary Storzer, Geneviève Murray, Simon Gray-Schleihauf, and Annette Przygoda. Finally, we would like to recognize the administrative and procedural support provided by Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Clerk Assistant and Committee Clerk, and Anne Stokes, Committee Clerk from the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, who was temporarily assigned to assist in our work.

# Executive Summary

On February 20, 2006, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia approved a motion instructing the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to conduct public consultations across British Columbia on the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper*. The Committee's terms of reference specified that the Committee was to receive proposals and recommendations regarding the provincial budget and fiscal policy for the coming fiscal year and make public its report no later than November 15, 2006.

One week prior to the release of the budget consultation paper, the Committee announced the locations of 14 public hearings in locations across British Columbia — with an additional public hearing later added in the lower mainland to accommodate high demand. In addition, the Committee announced it would again accept on-line and written submissions as a part of the consultation process. The Committee also reviewed all responses provided by October 20, 2006, from the province-wide mail-out of the budget consultation paper.

In this, the seventh year of public consultations on the provincial budget, the Committee received 8,329 unique submissions from interested citizens — shattering the record for public participation in the work of any parliamentary committee in British Columbia. This figure includes 211 oral submission made at the Committee's public hearings; 396 written submissions; 3,062 flyer responses; and 4,660 on-line responses.

Our report on the budget consultation process follows the general layout of this year's budget consultation paper. First, our analysis examines challenges faced by the Committee in responding to where the government should spend less, and provides a general summary of the public's priorities based on the categories provided in the consultation paper. This year's report also identifies the public's demand for the province to continue to invest in infrastructure, but to do so while keeping debt affordable.

In framing our recommendations to government, the Committee has categorized the public's priorities for Budget 2007 and beyond by highlighting three general themes that emerged through the various consultation formats used by the Committee. The key themes we heard this year include:

- build upon British Columbia's economic success story;
- enhance opportunities for those in need of assistance; and
- support B.C.'s communities and natural environment.

The diversity of recommendations made by the Committee reflects the difficulty associated with developing the provincial budget. The 36 recommendations highlight the everyday complex interactions between individuals and provincial fiscal policy. The Committee would like to thank all British Columbians who took the time to highlight how provincial fiscal and budgetary policy affects their personal and economic circumstances, as well as the performance of the provincial economy.

# Summary of the Consultation Process

## Introduction

On February 20, 2006, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia approved a motion instructing the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the Finance Committee / the Committee) to conduct public consultations across British Columbia, and to make proposals and recommendations regarding the provincial budget and fiscal policy. In accordance with sections 2 and 3 of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, this year marks the seventh time the all-party parliamentary committee has conducted province-wide public consultations.

This year, the Committee held a planning meeting on May 17, 2006 to discuss potential locations for public hearings, travel logistics, as well as potential innovations and outreach strategies in conjunction with the public consultations. At the invitation of the committee chair, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Carole Taylor, appeared before the Committee on July 11, 2006. The intended purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for dialogue between the Minister and committee members on the material to be presented in the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper*.

Before embarking on its month-long consultation process, there were several changes made to the Committee's membership on September 19, 2006. Randy Hawes, MLA, Iain Black, MLA, Bruce Ralston, MLA, John Horgan, MLA, and Bob Simpson, MLA, were appointed to serve on the Committee, replacing five former members of the Committee. Subsequently, on September 25, 2006, Bruce Ralston, MLA was elected deputy chair, replacing Maurine Karagianis, MLA.

The Committee would like to thank the contributions made by its former members: Hon. Gordon Hogg, John Yap, MLA, Maurine Karagianis, MLA, Leonard Krog, MLA and Nicholas Simons, MLA.

## Ministerial Briefing

> *"The real thinking — approach — behind this paper is just to say that balancing a budget requires give and take, and there are choices. There are places you would put more money; there are places you would pay less money. If we can draw the community into really thinking about where the give-and-take should happen, then I think we will all be better off."* (Hon. Carole Taylor, September 15, 2006).

On September 15, 2006, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Carole Taylor, released the *First Quarterly Update 2006/07* and the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper*. Following the release of this information, the Minister met with the Committee in Vancouver to discuss the key information presented in the first quarter update and budget consultation paper. Among the highlights contained in the fiscal update:

- A forecasted surplus for 2006/07 of $1.2 billion, up from $600 million announced in the budget of February 2006.
- Significant improvements in forecasted surpluses for both 2007/08 and 2008/09.

- An improved economic growth forecast of 3.6 percent for 2006 — up from 3.3 percent from Budget 2006.
- A continuing decline in the taxpayer-supported debt-to-GDP ratio.

However, the Minister also noted several internal and external challenges facing future budgets. These include:

- Volatility in revenues derived from natural resources, such as natural gas.
- Slower than forecasted growth in the economy of the United States.
- Pressures arising from rapidly increasing costs in the health care sector.

During her presentation to the Committee, the Minister stressed that she was challenging the public to provide input on what choices they would make in terms of where to spend more and where to spend less. In this context, the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper* asked British Columbians to provide responses to four questions relating to the public's fiscal choices and priorities.

To facilitate the discussion on British Columbians' priorities, the Minister also announced that the Ministry of Finance intended to mail the budget consultation paper to every household in British Columbia, as well as provide significant advertising and promotional support to the Committee's work.

## The Budget 2007 Consultation Paper

### Fiscal and Economic Forecast Data

This year's budget consultation paper provided British Columbians with a brief synopsis of the current allocation of resources within Budget 2006, as well as general information on the government's fiscal and economic forecasts to 2009/10. Such information included estimates on available and committed revenues, projections for taxpayer-supported infrastructure projects, and indications of a declining total debt-to-GDP ratio.

### Budget Consultation Questionnaire

This year, the budget consultation paper asked the public to respond to four specific questions. The first question asked British Columbians to indicate both areas in which the government should spend more and where it should spend less.

The second question asked respondents to prioritize 11 options in areas of provincial jurisdiction. The priority areas included in the consultation paper were as follows:

- Better access to social housing
- Protecting the environment
- Strengthening the economy and our standard of living
- Tax reductions
- New or expanded programs and services
- Reducing borrowing and debt
- Protecting people and property
- Educating our children and young adults
- Faster access to health services
- Improving assistance for people in need
- Building infrastructure like roads, schools and hospitals

As in the previous year, the consultation paper also contained a question concerning how the province should pay for upgrades in our infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population and a strong economy as well as an opportunity for respondents to provide other comments and suggestions for Budget 2007.

## Public Consultation Methods

> *"Whilst economic growth is dependent on a myriad of factors — including interest rate levels, commodity prices and the general economic health of our trading partners — government policy is a very, very important determinant as well. I realize that your deliberations are pivotal in terms of trying to make sure that the right decisions are made in the best interests of our province."* (Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia).

The Committee received significant support from both the Minister of Finance and the Ministry staff in carrying out this year's budget consultations. This support included province-wide distribution of the budget consultation paper and providing details on the Committee's work through advertisements in the province's community and regional papers.

This year, the Committee used four consultation methods to gauge the public's priorities for Budget 2007. As in past years, the Committee conducted regional public hearings, accepted written submissions, and received on-line responses to the four questions posed in the budget consultation paper. In addition, the Committee accepted and reviewed all hand-written responses to the budget consultation paper mailed back to the Committee prior to the submission deadline of October 20, 2006.

The Committee would like to note that all submissions received —oral testimony, written submissions, on-line responses, and flyers — were reviewed and given equal weight in our deliberations.

### Public Hearings

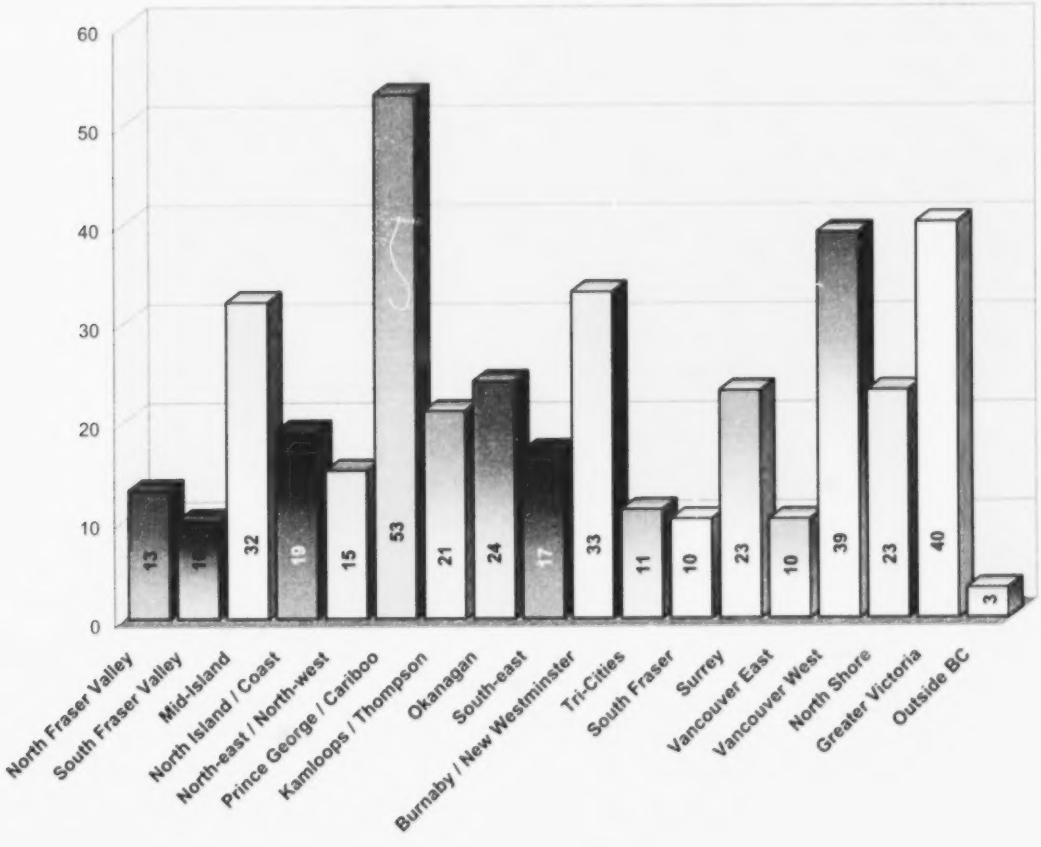
Between September 19 and October 17, 2006, the Committee held 15 public hearings in various communities across the province. The Committee announced the locations of these public hearings by issuing a media release posted on our website on September 8, 2006 and by placing newspaper advertisements in regional newspapers.

We had excellent turnout at our public hearings. Speaking times at the public hearings, in general, were fully subscribed, with 211 oral presentations made to the Committee. Given the strong demand, the Committee also made available open-mike speaking times to those individuals who had not pre-registered with the Office of the Clerk of Committees. At our public hearings, the Committee heard from a variety of organizations and individuals representing a diverse cross-section of community, business, labour, and educational interests. A complete list of those groups and individuals appearing before the Committee may be found in Appendix C.

## Written Submissions

The Committee received almost 400 written submissions via e-mail, fax, and mail. The submissions ranged in length from one-sentence responses to substantial research papers on how to best allocate the province's fiscal resources. Figure 1 provides an overview of the submissions received by region. A complete list of written submissions received by the Committee may be found in Appendix D.

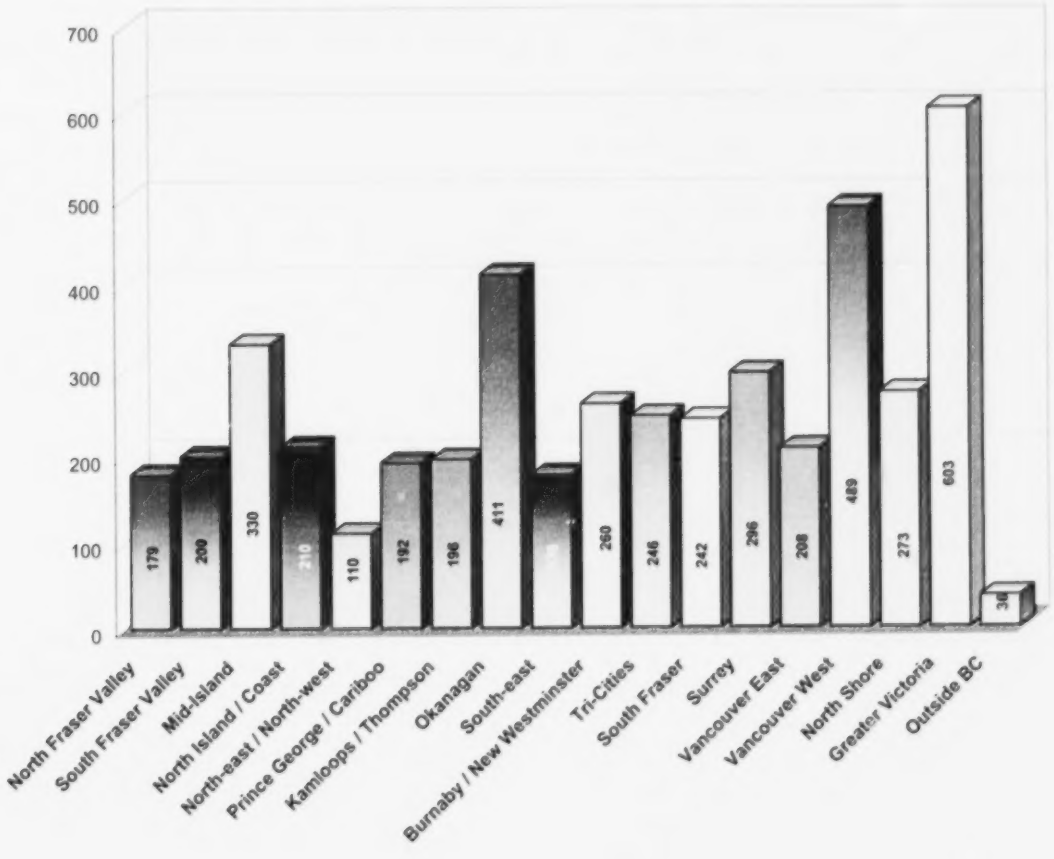
**Figure 1: Written Submissions by Region**



## On-line Responses

Again this year, the public was provided the opportunity to respond to the Ministry of Finance's budget consultation paper through the Committee's on-line response form. Over the course of the consultation process, the Committee received more than 4,600 unique responses through its secure website. The number of on-line responses to the consultation process establishes a new record for the number of citizens taking part in the work of a parliamentary committee in British Columbia. Figure 2 provides an overview of the on-line responses received by region, with participants using this format of consultation listed in Appendix E.

**Figure 2: On-Line Responses by Region**



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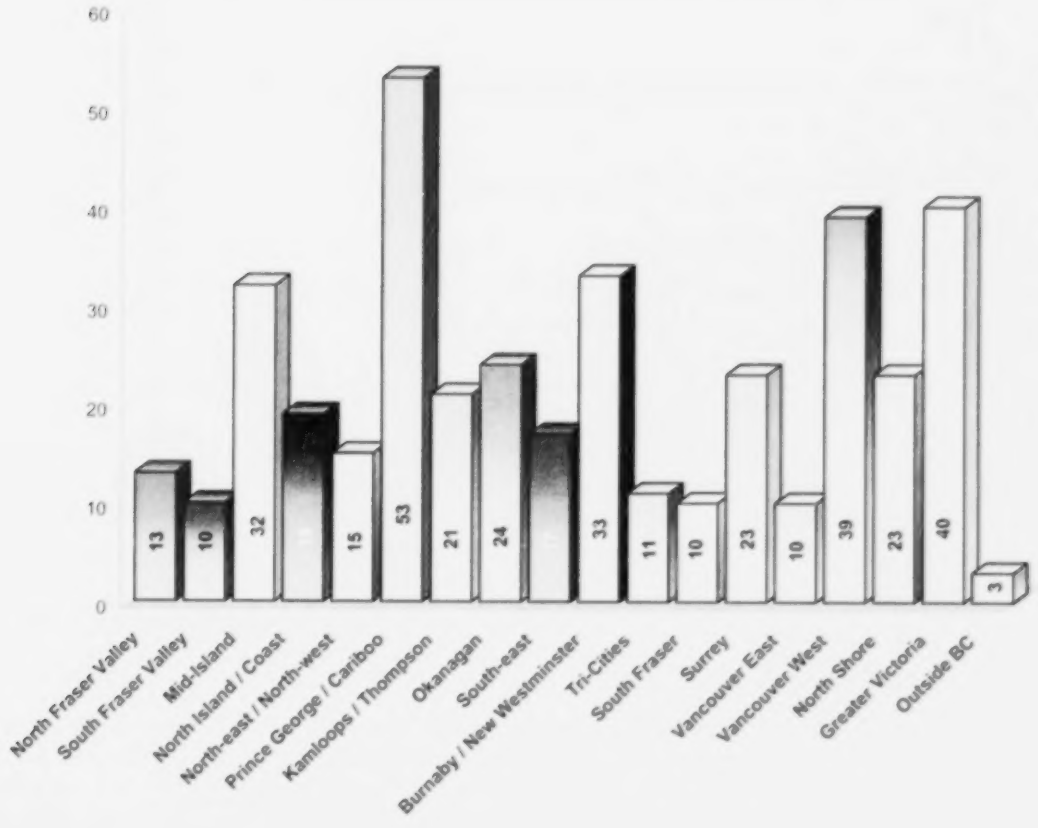

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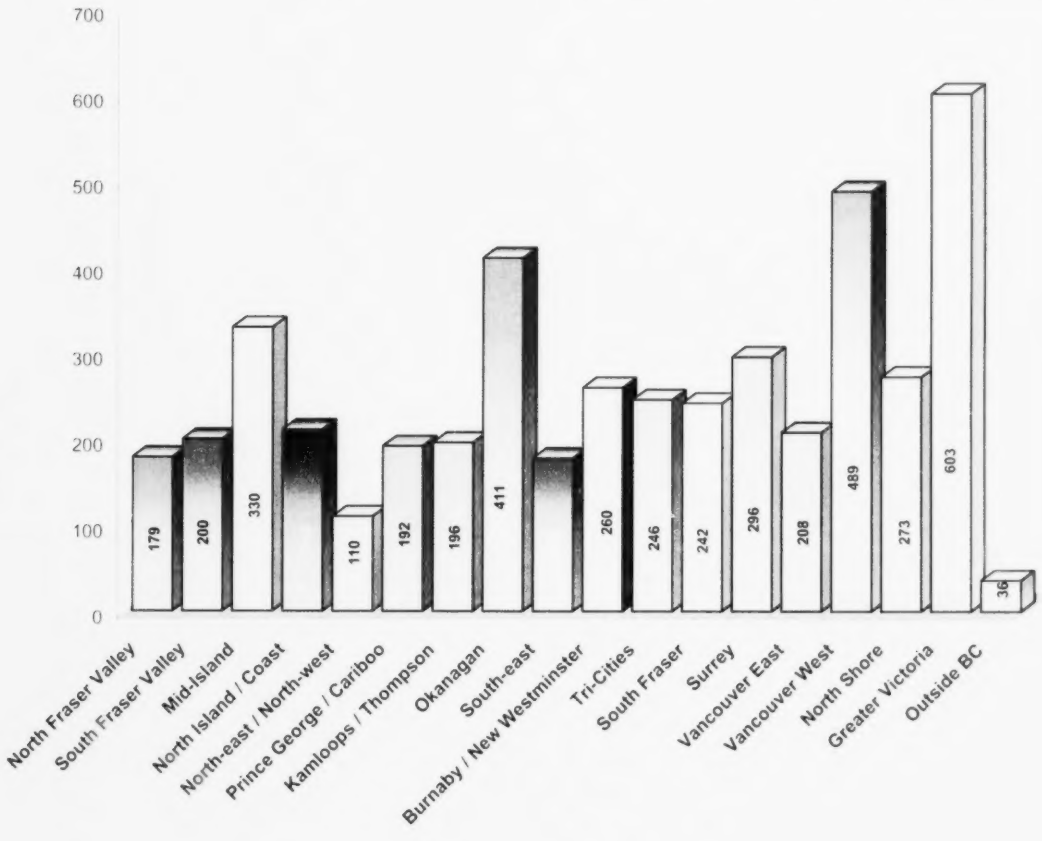
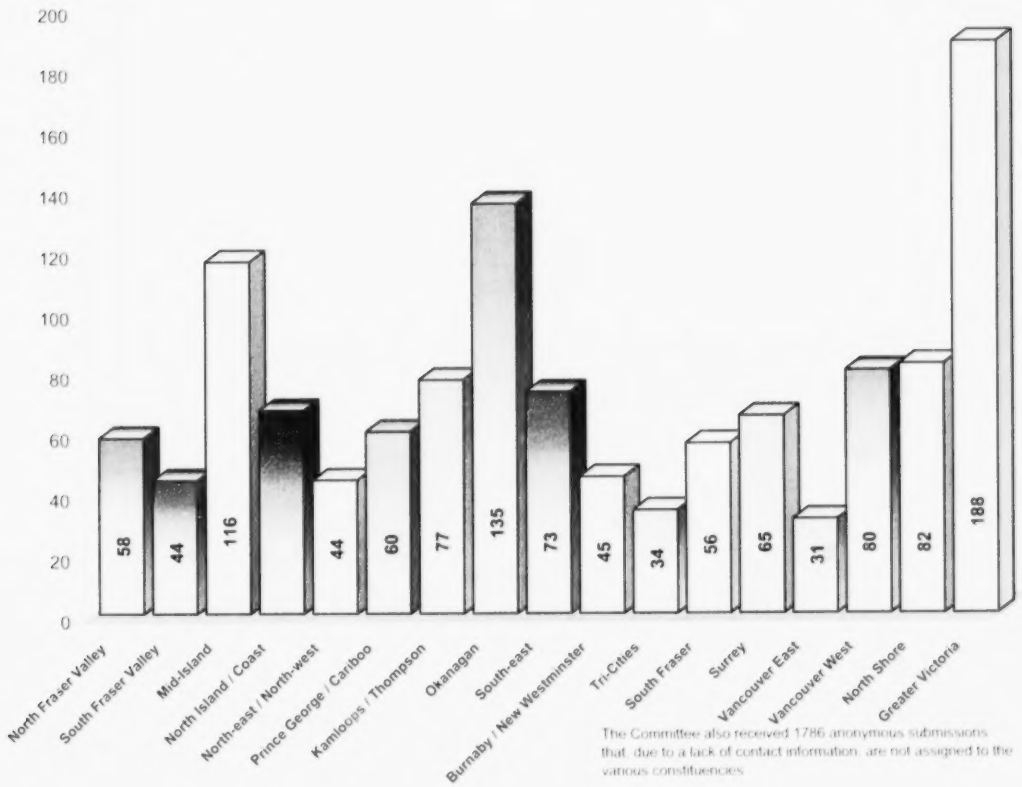


## Household Flyers

This year, the Ministry of Finance mailed copies of the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper* — including the questionnaire — as a flyer to households across the province. In total, the Committee received back more than 3,000 flyers postmarked by our October 20 consultation deadline. Figure 3 highlights the geographic distribution of the flyers that contained contact information.

**Figure 3: Flyers Received by Region**




The Committee also received 1786 anonymous submissions that, due to a lack of contact information, are not assigned to the various constituencies.

It is the Committee's opinion that such mail-outs serve an important role in informing all British Columbians about the current state of the province's finances, as well as notifying the public about how they may participate in shaping the upcoming provincial budget. Indeed, the budget consultation paper may be the only direct source of information the public reviews pertaining to how the government spends taxpayers' money.

Below is a sample of some of the positive feedback we received on the flyer:

> *"Thank you, this is a great tool to help people to understand the complexity of the process."* (Gerald Fussell, Comox).
>
> *"Thank you for the opportunity to express some of these concerns and for allowing this type of candid input from taxpayers."* (Rick Hopkins, Campbell River).

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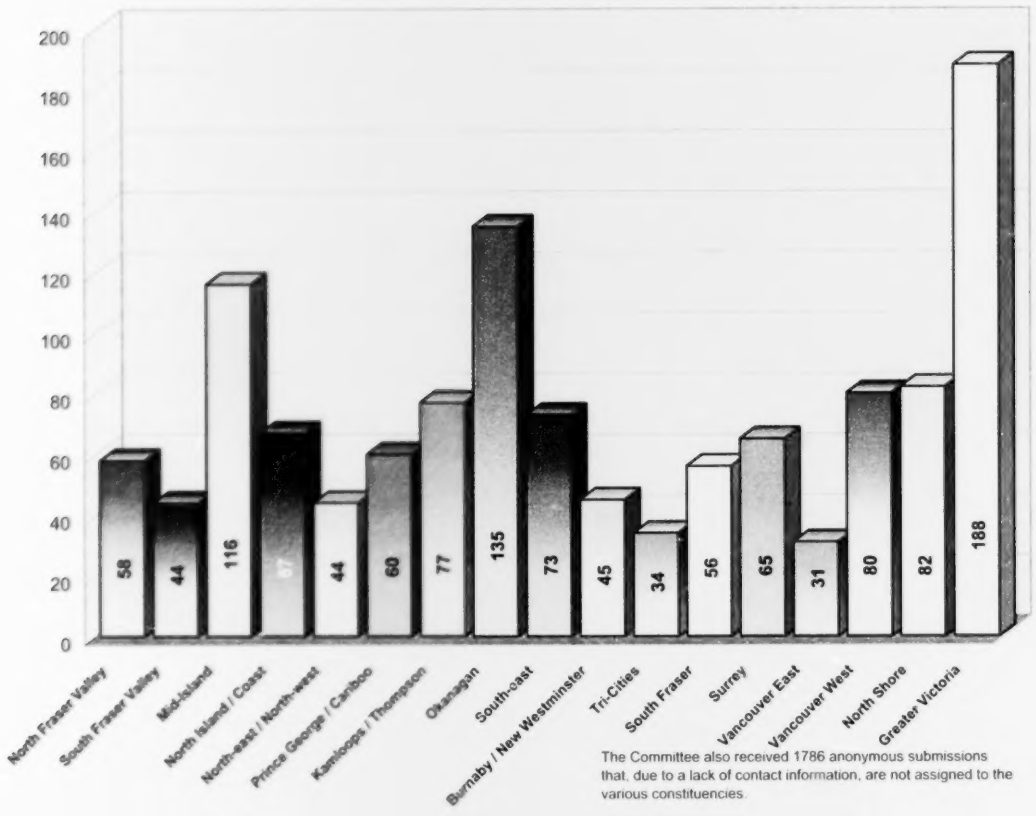


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>
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*"I hope to see more public surveys like this in the future… The survey did a good job of making a point that if you want to spend more on something, you have to spend less on something else."* (Graham Warner, Victoria).

However, the public did propose several suggestions to improve the process. A sample of the suggestions we heard include the following:

*"This form should be pre-addressed for mail, envelope style!"* (Esther Riffel, Armstrong).

*"If you are serious about having this returned - it would be better to produce it in a more mail-able format."* (Merlyn A. Bigham, Kamloops).

*"The paper that was mailed out was not clear as to whether or not it was actually a form to be mailed in. If it was - it was way too large and awkward to mail."* (Karen Lay, Victoria).

### Public Hearing Summary

The schedule of meetings is provided at the end of this section. The appendices to this report include additional information on the organizations and individuals taking part in the Budget 2007 consultation process and the different types of submissions received. For more information on the work of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, including the minutes, transcripts and audio webcasts of all public hearings conducted by the Committee, please visit our website at www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/fgs.

## Schedule of Meetings

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| March 7, 2006 | Orientation meeting | Victoria |
| May 17, 2006 | Planning Session | Victoria |
| July 11, 2006 | Briefing — Hon. Carole Taylor | Victoria |
| September 15, 2006 | Briefing — Hon. Carole Taylor | Vancouver |
| September 19, 2006 | Public Hearing | Nanaimo |
| September 19, 2006 | Public Hearing | Courtenay |
| September 20, 2006 | Public Hearing | Vancouver |
| September 25, 2006 | Public Hearing | Nelson |
| September 25, 2006 | Public Hearing | Kelowna |
| September 26, 2006 | Public Hearing | Kamloops |
| September 26, 2006 | Public Hearing | Williams Lake |
| September 27, 2006 | Public Hearing | Surrey |
| October 4, 2006 | Public Hearing | Fort St. John |
| October 4, 2006 | Public Hearing | Prince George |
| October 5, 2006 | Public Hearing | Terrace |
| October 5, 2006 | Public Hearing | Prince Rupert |
| October 6, 2006 | Public Hearing | Abbotsford |
| October 16, 2006 | Public Hearing | Victoria |
| October 17, 2006 | Public Hearing | Port Coquitlam |
| October 23, 2006 | Deliberations | Victoria |
| October 30, 2006 | Deliberations | Victoria |
| October 31, 2006 | Deliberations | Victoria |
| November 7, 2006 | Deliberations | Victoria |
| November 10, 2006 | Deliberations and Adoption of Report | Victoria |

## Comments on the Fiscal Plan

This year, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Carole Taylor released the *First Quarterly Report for 2006/07* and *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper* on September 15. The update outlined a significant improvement in the budget projections for 2006/07 and beyond. For example, the Minister stated that the projected budget surplus for 2006/07 had increased to $1.2 billion (from $600 million); solid gains in employment, retail sales, housing market activity had been made; and noted the increased revenue projections from taxation and BC Hydro net income. Acting as a counter-balance, the Minister forecasted a significant decline in revenues from natural gas, as well as increased direct government spending and cost pressures arising from additional spending by health authorities, universities and colleges, and school districts.

Building upon these revenue and cost items, the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper* gave British Columbians the opportunity to provide the Committee feedback on where the government should spend more…and spend less; prioritize eleven key elements of the provincial budget; indicate how much debt the province should take on to build and revitalize key highway, health, and educational infrastructure; as well as to provide other suggestions on the province's fiscal priorities.

In reviewing the more than 8,000 submissions received during our consultation process, it is clear that there is a diversity of opinions over how the government should allocate future fiscal plan surpluses. As with previous our reports, the Committee believes that the budget consultation process provides a unique window on the thoughts of British Columbians concerning the upcoming February budget. We believe that it is important for this report to reflect what we heard on the wide array of programs, services and policy decisions made by government.

With respect to Question 1 — where would you spend more and where would you spend less in the provincial budget? — the Committee is hesitant to make a formal recommendation in part because we did not receive a sufficient level of responses to this question to adequately assess where the public believes budget reductions could be made.

Similarly, the Committee is disinclined to make suggestions on how the Minister should prioritize the 11 options put forward under Question 2. The clear message we heard from British Columbians is that the government should maintain the current allocation of resources amongst the priority areas, but that government should address specific programs and services within these broad categories.

In response to Question 3 — what choices would you make between investing in infrastructure and managing British Columbia's debt? — we heard overwhelming support for the government to continue to invest in infrastructure but limit its borrowing to keep debt affordable.

Using the consultation paper as a framework for the province-wide discussion on the provincial budget and fiscal policy for the coming year, the Finance Committee will categorize its recommendations to government based on the following themes.

### Build upon British Columbia's Economic Success Story

A distinct message that we heard from across the province was that the government has made great strides in promoting British Columbia as a great place for individual and corporate investment. With continued plans for significant allocations towards the provincial debt, projected declines in the province's debt-to-GDP ratio, steady increases in budget surpluses, and strong projections for economic growth, British Columbia's fiscal plan is sound. Our recommendations concerning the provincial economy focus on three distinct areas: debt reduction, competitive personal, corporate and consumption tax rates, as well as policies to promote British Columbia as destination for motivated students, small businesses and employees.

### Enhance Assistance for Those in Immediate Need

A second clear message we heard is that with strong economic growth, the government must continue to provide support for those British Columbians facing immediate need. In reviewing the submissions we received on this theme, the Committee addresses in its recommendations growing public concerns over affordable housing and homelessness, early assessments of students learning capabilities, mental health, supports for the disabled and those with special needs, health care options for seniors, child care, and women's services.

### Support British Columbia's Community Infrastructure and Natural Environment

Third, during out consultations we heard of a growing public demand for the provincial government to provide continued support for local communities, economic sectors, as well as support for enhancing environmental protection. In particular, we heard that the provincial government should: continue to address increased demands on our highway and public transit infrastructure; provide additional support to communities facing challenges with respect to drinking, industrial, and agricultural water infrastructure; assist universities in completing capital projects; examine additional programs to bolster British Columbia's agricultural and forestry sectors; and renew commitments to environmental protection and pollution enforcement.

# The Trade-Off: Where to Spend More... and Where to Spend Less

> ***Question 1: There are always more demands placed on the public purse than we can meet. That means if we want to spend more in one area, we must find ways to spend less somewhere else.***
>
> ***Where do you think the budget should spend more? And to pay for it, where do you think the budget should spend less?***

The first question in this year's budget consultation questionnaire was designed to encourage a debate on where the province should allocate its financial resources. Over the course of our consultation process it became evident these questions would not produce easy answers.

In particular, the Committee encountered few witnesses who were willing to express specific opinions on where the government could spend less. While the Committee received a multitude of options on where the government could spend more, the second component of question one appeared to be more challenging. Based on what we heard, the Committee offers two hypotheses to explain the lack of specific responses we received to this question.

We recognize that British Columbians lead busy and productive lives — lives which are not typically devoted to conducting a line-by-line analysis of provincial budget documents. Indeed, the budget consultation paper may have been the first opportunity for many British Columbians to review details about the province's finances. In these cases, while percentage allocations to various priority areas within the budget are helpful tools in highlighting government expenditures, it is difficult for the public to make recommendations to cut areas such as "social services" or "health" without knowing specifically what that recommendation would entail.

While noting that comprehensive financial data and budgetary assumptions are presented in the *First Quarterly Report*, we observed that many witnesses premised their responses strictly on the summary data presented in the budget consultation paper. Though the Committee encourages all British Columbians to review the *First Quarterly Report*, we realise that not everyone who made a submission had the time to review this primary document. The Committee wishes to offer support for providing future recipients of the budget consultation paper with a concise, yet robust, picture of fiscal data concurrently available in the first quarterly reports — including summary information on projected revenues, expenses, forecast allowances, and surpluses.

Although it would be impossible to list all government programs and anticipated expenditures in a document like the budget consultation paper, the Committee notes that useful "spending by ministry" information is already disclosed publicly in the first quarterly reports. We believe that framing the debate around specific ministries — rather than broad categories — would result in more responses to this type of question. Here is a sample of what we heard:

> *"More information would allow people to consider more thoroughly what the budget pays for and what options there are for prioritization."* (Blaine Jones, Vernon).

*"It's hard to know where the government should cut because not enough information is given."* (Celeste Brosseau, New Westminster).

*"This question is impossible to answer without the detailed information supporting each of the programs."* (Thomas R. Edwards, Saanichton).

The Committee did, however, observe two areas in which the public offered specific concerns without prompting. These include concerns over the provincial government's financial commitments to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, and the efficiency of the public sector bureaucracy.

## Provincial Funding Commitments for the 2010 Winter Olympics

Olympic cost pressures were frequently cited as an area of concern by on-line and flyer respondents. Several submissions highlighted the possibility of substantial economic benefits accruing to the province, but expressed concerns about the province's financial indemnification of the Games. Here is a sample of what we heard.

*"Hold the line on the 2010 Olympics costs!!! We as a province are committed to the Olympics now and cannot back out, but I do not look favourably on continuing massive cost increases (that come out of public funds and impact the remaining amounts available for other public funding priorities)."* (Jack Dryburgh, Port Alberni).

*"Although it may be too late at this point, I also think that the government should spend less on the Olympics and related infrastructure for the games."* (Jody Patch, Courtenay).

## Efficiency in Government

Another common theme voiced in the on-line responses was the perception of inefficiencies in the public sector bureaucracy. In particular, some respondents expressed a desire for ongoing reviews of all government programs to ensure they are properly staffed and provide the most cost-effective delivery of services.

*"There is still a lot of waste in government. The government's efforts to cut staff in ministries at the beginning of the first term has not led to greater efficiency across the operation. Efficiencies of bureaucracy are still possible."* (Cynthia van Ginkel, Port Moody).

*"I believe that there is still room for transformation of government which could lower costs and improve services."* (Owen Taylor, Victoria).

# A Question of Priorities

***Question 2: When creating a budget, it is necessary to choose between many worthy and important options. How would you prioritize the following?***

***Please rank the following items from 1 to 11, with one being the most important and 11 being the least:***

- ***Better access to social housing***
- ***Protecting the environment***
- ***Strengthening the economy and our standard of living***
- ***Tax reductions***
- ***New or expanded programs and services***
- ***Reducing borrowing and debt***
- ***Protecting people and property***
- ***Educating our children and young adults***
- ***Faster access to health services***
- ***Improving assistance for people in need***
- ***Building infrastructure like roads, schools and hospitals.***

The focus of the second question of the budget consultation paper challenged British Columbians to rank eleven broad themes that must be considered when crafting a provincial budget. In an effort to have British Columbians provide feedback on Question 2, the Committee required all on-line respondents to completely rank the priorities from one to eleven prior to submitting their response. Similarly, most of the people who sent back the household flyers took it upon themselves to rank all of the priorities.

Based on the feedback we received, we offer the following synopsis:

- The public places a high priority on providing faster access to health services and educating our children and young adults.
- We heard clear calls for the government to continue to reduce borrowing and debt.
- Both on-line and written responses placed a great emphasis on the category protecting the environment.
- Within the context of prioritizing future spending, strengthening the economy, reducing taxes, improving assistance for people in need, building new infrastructure, providing better access to social housing, and protecting people and property were priorities receiving moderate support.
- On-line and flyer responses indicated a clear lack of public demand for the creation of new programs and services.

Within these broad categories, many witnesses and respondents provided the Committee with greater detail on how to best manage existing levels of taxation, programs, or services. For each priority area identified by the Minister, we have provided a sampling of the different requests heard by the Committee. Our recommendations on particular policies and programs within these priority areas follow at the end of this report.

## Better Access to Social Housing

One area of concern expressed by various people was for greater access to affordable housing options for those in immediate and pressing need. During the Committee's deliberations, the government announced significant funding for low-income working families seeking rental accommodation, as well as expanded programs for subsidized housing for individuals who are either at-risk or are currently homeless.

The Finance Committee heard encouragement for the government's Rental Assistance Program. However, we also heard requests from some witnesses that the government consider including accommodation offered through non-profits and co-operatives under this particular program.

We also heard a variety of calls for the government to increase the shelter allowance for income assistance recipients. The Committee notes that the government has committed to increasing the shelter allowance provided to individuals receiving income assistance.

One concern expressed by a few committee members was for the need to ensure that rental assistance programs are also applicable and accessible to individuals living in accommodations not explicitly covered under the *Residential Tenancy Act* — such as those renting accommodation in properties covered under the *Hotel Keepers Act*. In particular, some Members expressed concerns that property owners providing single-occupant accommodations in hotels and motels would increase the rents charged to match any increased assistance, thereby negating the net benefit to income assistance recipients living in these forms of accommodation.

Other topics addressed by witnesses included providing additional support for those currently without shelter, as well as calls for the government to construct affordable rental housing.

### Rental Accommodation Assistance

On October 3, 2006, the government announced that the province would allocate $40 million for a rental assistance program to improve accommodation opportunities for working families with incomes under $20,000 per year. An additional announcement was made on October 27 indicating that the 2007 budget would provide for an unspecified increase in the shelter allowances for income assistance receipients.

Prior to these announcements, we heard several calls for increasing shelter allowances in tandem with calls for increasing income assistance rates. Some of the comments included:

> *"The Real Estate Board of Victoria would like to congratulate the government for their new housing strategy and for the announcement of the new rental allowance program for low-income renters in British Columbia, which is similar in design to the established Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters program. These steps help support a healthy housing marketplace."* (Victoria Real Estate Board).
>
> *"We need appropriate supports for women living in poverty. We recommend the province immediately increase income assistance rates to allow families to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter and reduce risk to children growing up in poverty."* (Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society).

## Homelessness

The Committee also heard several calls for the government to do more to assist individuals facing an immediate housing crisis. In particular, we heard of the need for more emergency shelter beds, as well as increased support for programs to assist those in need of longer-term housing options. Below are some of the suggestions we received:

> *"The RSCH recommends: increased funding supporting services that assist homeless people to access and maintain stable housing; increased funding for outreach workers; improving outreach to people who are homeless."* (Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness).
>
> *"On the homeless and people in our cities who have hit bottom: we should be building shelters and housing for the homeless and people with mental disabilities."* (Steffany Walker, Richmond).

## Affordable Rental Accommodations

Several witnesses called on the provincial government to accelerate and expand construction of non-profit rental properties. Witnesses in smaller communities conveyed their perceptions of existing shortages of affordable accommodation — with limited new affordable housing options planned for the near future. Some witnesses called for the government to take a more active role in affordable housing construction, including providing funding for new low-cost housing options and the rehabilitation of derelict or abandoned buildings.

Here is a sample of what we heard:

> *"Housing in the north is probably similar to the lower mainland in that there is a lack of it for our growth, and especially a lack in low-cost housing. The government has to seriously look at some type of low-cost, subsidized housing. The high occupancy rates in Chetwynd are driving housing beyond the affordability of low incomes."* (District of Chetwynd).
>
> *"We strongly recommend a comprehensive, balanced and fully funded affordable housing strategy that includes: capital grants for new affordable housing, rehabilitation of abandoned and substandard buildings, rent-geared-to-income assistance for low income households, support services for those who need help accessing and maintaining their homes, and development assistance for community-based housing providers."* (British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association).

## Recommendation

**The Committee recommends that:**

- In light of recent government commitments to provide increased support for affordable housing options provided under both the Rental Assistance and Shelter Allowance Programs, the government continues to address British Columbians' needs for a diverse selection and an increase in the number of affordable rental housing accommodations. Furthermore, the government should expedite the review and development of its comprehensive housing strategy that may include, but is not limited to:
    - Capital grants for new affordable housing and co-op housing,
    - Rehabilitation of abandoned and substandard buildings,
    - Support services for those in need, and
    - Assistance for community-based housing providers.

## Protecting the Environment

One of the primary themes that emerged this year — particularly in the on-line responses received by the Committee — was for the government to take a more active role in "protecting the environment." Specifically, questionnaire respondents from Greater Victoria, mid-Vancouver Island, and ridings on the west side of Vancouver ranked protecting the environment as high a priority as either "faster access to health services" or "educating our children and young adults."

While most respondents only indicated that government should "spend more on the environment," the Committee also received specific suggestions on areas requiring action. These priority areas included: enhancing enforcement of environmental regulations, improving policies pertaining to climate change, and improving fresh water management and infrastructure.

### On-the-ground Enforcement

The Finance Committee received numerous submissions that outlined the need for increased enforcement of environmental regulations in the province — in particular for more on-the-ground staff to ensure compliance and enforcement. Some of the suggestions were:

> *"I believe that protecting the environment is the single most important issue. We need more staff for the field offices in the province, and fines and disincentives for those who choose to ignore the rules."* (Doug Leatherdale, Salmon Arm).
>
> *"I think that the government should increase the number of field staff in both Environment and Forest offices. Protecting the environment should be the number one priority of this government."* (Barry Booth, Prince George).
>
> *"The Ministry of Environment's Environmental Stewardship Division is in need of a significant investment in structural change in order to become both productive and efficient in its business.* (B.C. Wildlife Federation).

### Climate Change

Another clear message we heard is that British Columbians are concerned about the ramifications of climate change. We received a significant number of submissions that focused on the need for government to prioritize climate change, including a suggestion that the provincial government consider the implications that changes in budget priorities may have on greenhouse gas emissions. We also heard witnesses recommend that British Columbia continue to pursue opportunities to become a leader in climate change initiatives, especially in the area of alternative energy. We received submissions too about the importance of encouraging infrastructure that supports sustainable forms of development. Here is a sample of what we heard:

> *"We're here to talk about the fact that we currently have no analysis about budget items and their impacts on greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia. We recommend the B.C. Government begin annual systematic reporting on emissions of current and proposed budget measures."* (Conservation Voters of B.C.).
>
> *"Implement tough greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that go well beyond Kyoto; invest in ministries and programs to protect fish, food, water and resources at*

*risk from climate change. Both regulations and incentives are required along with the bureaucratic tools to implement, enforce and monitor."* (B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union).

*"The most important thing is for B.C. to make a commitment to not only do its part, but to become a leader in the process of ameliorating the risks of climate change."* (John Mayba, Port Alberni).

*"B.C. has many environmentally safe sources of energy i.e. wind, oceans, rivers, thermal, etc. The government should promote the development and use of alternate energy by rewarding companies and individuals who do so."* (Vincent and Evelyn Hernandez, Powell River).

### Drought and Water Management

Several witnesses expressed concerns over pressures being placed on the province's water supply. Submissions received by the Committee expressed apprehension about the province's current water infrastructure being able to cope with growing and competing demands for water available for drinking, industrial, and agricultural uses. Specifically, we heard that competition for scarce water resources — magnified by drought conditions in some parts of the province — is particularly acute in some of the province's more rural areas.

Other submissions stressed the need for the provincial government to continue to work with the federal government on programs to assist agricultural producers — including, but not limited to, tree fruit growers, cattle ranchers and grain and oilseed producers from around the province — in need of immediate assistance caused by not only drought conditions, but by adverse market conditions. Furthermore, public submissions on this topic called for the provincial government to work closely with federal, municipal, and regional partners to increase investments in water infrastructure and storage facilities, as well as for the government to take a lead role in promoting conservation and effective water utilization. Below are some of the comments we received:

*"This year, following lower-than-normal snowfall, our summer has been one of the hottest drought summers on record. Drought, coupled with high grasshopper infestations, has led to very low cereal grain production and poor hay crops. Our agriculture industry is concerned that the federal-provincial Canadian agriculture income stabilization program, otherwise known as CAIS, will not be able to meet the needs of the industry in time... Input costs are rising, and cash flow is short. Interim assistance is critical."* (Peace River Regional District)

*"Water is a key input for the industry, and we're facing significant challenges, as a result of economic growth throughout the province, in terms of access to water. Investment is going to be required in both infrastructure for storage etc., and in education relating to conservation and implementing measures for effective utilization."* (B.C. Agriculture Council).

*"Changes to our natural environment, mainly through global warming, are causing levels of domestic potable water to recede. Rapid urbanization is also placing strains on these resources. The British Columbia Real Estate Association would like to see the government work more closely with the other levels of government and the private*

*sector to examine the strain on water supplies and infrastructure and to establish a body of information and a plan to address that strain. We want water stewardship, infrastructure, and groundwater protection and security to be a priority."* (Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board).

## Recommendations

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Ensure sufficient staffing and resources are provided to the various ministries and agencies responsible for the ongoing monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations.
- Review — in consultation with both industry and the public — existing programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, monitor and publicly report on emissions impacts, and continue to support programs encouraging the development and use of clean energies and fuels.
- Work with the Government of Canada to ensure appropriate assistance to those regions and sectors of the province facing crisis situations, including drought in the Peace River region, Mountain Pine Beetle affected areas, and the fruit tree industry in the Okanagan.
- Review investments in water infrastructure and water demand management programs, particularly to address potential shortages in both municipal and agricultural uses.

## Strengthening the Economy and our Standard of Living

While the vast majority of submissions pertaining to the economy disclosed preferences for tax reductions, infrastructure investment, and continued emphasis on debt management, the Committee wishes to relay two specific suggestions for strengthening the economy and our standard of living. One suggestion involved a significant expansion of the provincial nominee program, while the other suggestion made by the construction and trades employers is designed to ensure the efficiency of the new apprenticeship training tax credit program.

### Immigration and Immigrant Employment Programs

While several witnesses cited the current memorandum of understanding between the provincial and federal governments for entrepreneurs as being beneficial in bolstering the immigration of qualified individuals to British Columbia, we heard from the construction industry of an urgent need to expand the program to include a wider variety of candidates — including *both* skilled workers and unskilled labourers. We also heard that the sheer volume of paperwork associated with subscribing to the program produced a substantial regulatory hurdle.

Here are some of the concerns we heard:

> *"Given the current unparalleled levels of growth in the industry and the difficulties being experienced in recruiting a sufficient number of domestic workers, the British Columbia Construction Association (BCCA) believes that temporary and permanent immigration could assist in augmenting the supply of construction labour in Canada. BCCA recommends that government reinforce their commitment to the Provincial Nominee Program and commit additional resources to bolster the PNP to insure both employers and immigrants have timely access to this program."* (British Columbia Construction Association).
>
> *"The worker shortage ranges from skilled workers to labourers to retail workers to service workers. It is across the board. Investors tell us that until they can know with some certainty that they'll be able to open the plants they're planning to build, they can't make the investment commitment. It's that uncertainty that we're facing and that lack of opportunity which will result in reduced tax revenues."* (Initiatives Prince George).
>
> *"It's not just the skilled trades that we're looking at. Many of our members require labourers, estimators, project managers, administration staff, etc. The numbers are huge. We believe that immigration and temporary workers are key."* (Northern British Columbia Construction Association).

Although not specifically addressed in this year's budget consultation process, committee members agreed that it is important to reiterate at the end of this section its recommendation made in last year's report concerning the accelerated assessment and credentialing of foreign-trained physicians. Specifically, the Committee reconfirms that the provincial government, in conjunction with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia, should continue to increase the number of residency positions for internationally-trained physicians, and that the provincial government continue to encourage the federal government to expand the federally-sponsored assessment process of physician's credentials.

### Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit

The Committee heard favourable responses from the construction industry concerning the government's introduction of an apprenticeship training tax credit in the 2006 budget. Although the tax credit has not been fully implemented, industry representatives expressed some concerns that the eligible employers applying for the tax credit must meet completion targets for apprenticeship training. Here is what we heard:

> *"The (training) tax credit should be applicable to all training programs accredited through the Industry Training Authority, with the proviso that industry groups have the opportunity to make application through the ITA or the pertinent industry training organization to have their particular training program recognized. Secondly, the tax credit should support completions in apprenticeship and industry training. The key word there is completions. Third, the tax credit should be tied to payroll information."* (British Columbia Construction Association).
>
> *"We certainly commend the province for introducing the training tax credit in the last budget. We feel this will have a positive effect on employer participation in apprenticeship and trades training. Our association recommends that the government work closely with industry in the development of the Training Tax Credit to ensure direct buy-in by employers and to ensure the tax credit hits the mark and achieves the objectives for which it was intended."* (Northern British Columbia Construction Association)

## Recommendations

### The Committee recommends that the government:

- Continue to work with the Government of Canada on the Provincial Nominee Program to expand the number and definition of qualified immigrants eligible for the program.
- Work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia to increase the number of residency positions for internationally-trained doctors and continue to work to accelerate the assessment of physicians' credentials.
- Work with business, industry, and labour partners in expediting the full implementation of the training tax credit to ensure it meets the objectives of providing assistance to employers, as well as the completion of apprenticeships.

## Tax Reductions

Another area in which the Committee observed a difference between the written and oral submissions and the on-line and flyer responses was on the issue of tax reductions. We heard repeatedly from various organizations representing businesses of an immediate and pressing need for British Columbia's taxation regime to remain competitive with other jurisdictions in Canada and the United States, with respect to corporate, income, and consumption taxes.

Below is a sample of what we heard from British Columbia's business community.

> *"We believe that the B.C. government should continue its prudent fiscal strategy, and further strengthen the province's economic position by reducing the tax load borne by B.C.'s households and businesses which will in turn strengthen the government's tax base."* (Canadian Bankers Association).
>
> *"The Chamber commends the government on its action to reduce this tax burden. The strong focus shown by this government has resulted in B.C. enjoying a competitive taxation regime compared to other provinces — and in relation to many other North American jurisdictions. Having said that, there is no room for complacency. Now is the time for government to develop a comprehensive plan that addresses our tax competitiveness on a short-, medium- and long-term basis."* (B.C. Chamber of Commerce).

However, in reviewing the individual responses received through the on-line and flyer consultations, we observed that while there is some appetite for reductions in personal income and consumption taxes, such rollbacks were rated as only a moderate priority. The comments we heard from these methods of consultations included:

> *"It's nice to have tax reductions but if the taxes are going towards things to better our community (improving downtown area, finding homes for the homeless, etc.) then tax increases don't affect me as much.* (Jessica Purkis, Parksville).
>
> *"Tax reductions are not a priority at this point if the economy is strong — (I'm) not advocating for tax increases though."* (Mitsuho Miyata, Port Moody).

Regardless of the apparent perplexity of where tax reductions would rank vis-à-vis business and individual preferences, the Committee heard many calls for the government to review the property transfer tax, corporate income taxes, taxation on financial services, reductions in the social services/provincial sales tax (PST), as well as the harmonization of the PST and goods and services taxes (GST).

### Property Transfer Tax

One area of taxation identified as being problematic — particularly for first-time home-buyers — is that of the property transfer tax. While the government continues to receive higher-than-projected revenues from this source, the Committee heard that the current thresholds were acting as a barrier preventing first-time homeowners from entering the market.

Currently, the property transfer tax exemptions for first-time homeowners are set at $325,000 for purchases within the Capital Regional District, Greater Vancouver, and Fraser Valley

regional districts, with an exemption of $265,000 for homes purchased outside of these regions.

A clear message we heard from the real estate community is that the current thresholds are too low to provide enough assistance for first-time home buyers. Witnesses made several recommendations ranging from increasing the thresholds provided to first-time home buyers, to eliminating the one percent tax on the first $200,000 of the purchase price, to eliminating the tax altogether. Here is a sample of what we heard:

> *"The thresholds for the capital region should be raised annually and considerably to enable first-time homebuyers to qualify for the exemption. We propose linking the threshold formula for exemption to the annual median sales price of the region on a region-by-region basis."* (Victoria Real Estate Board).
>
> *"Our recommendation is to eliminate the one percent Property Transfer Tax on the first $200,000 for all homebuyers in the budget year 2009-2010. The $200,000 price threshold has remained unchanged since it was introduced in 1987, when the average home price in Greater Vancouver was $42,200."* (Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver).

### Corporate Income Tax

Witnesses commended the government on its continued efforts to reduce corporate income tax rates. However, several presentations identified that the Government of Alberta has announced plans to reduce its corporate income tax rates to eight percent in the near future. Citing the British Columbia Competition Council's June 2006 report, witnesses called for B.C.'s corporate income tax rates not to exceed Alberta's corporate tax rate by more than 25 percent. Here is what we heard:

> *"We recommend that B.C.'s general corporate income tax rate be lowered to 10 percent in anticipation of Alberta's pending reduction."* (Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia).
>
> *"There is talk about Alberta going to eight percent with their corporate tax rate, and we think B.C. businesses are expecting this government to follow suit, not necessarily with respect to getting to the same rate, but at least in that same direction. From experience we've seen how lowering corporate income taxes have resulted in a direct increase in corporate profitability, which we believe allows companies to reinvest in technology and jobs."* (Grant Thornton LLP).

### Capital Tax on Financial Corporations

One area of common concern expressed by witnesses representing the financial services sector was a unified call for a reduction and elimination of the capital tax on financial corporations. Citing a recommendation made by the British Columbia Competition Council, witnesses expressed their frustration that the financial sector was being singled out for a higher rate of taxation. Oral and written presentations made to the Committee noted that British Columbia was falling behind competing Canadian jurisdictions such as Ontario, Quebec and Alberta, where such taxes have either been eliminated or dramatically reduced. The submissions stated that the continued collection of this tax was making British Columbia

uncompetitive with respect to investment and job creation in this sector. Here are some of the comments we received:

> *"Levying a three percent tax on capital has restricted the growth of the important financial services sector in B.C. If the province is not prepared to eliminate the capital tax entirely, then removing it from financial businesses registered under the International Financial Activities Act will make it possible for banks to set up international business units here."* (International Finance Centre).
>
> *"The Canadian Bankers Association's number one priority in B.C. continues to be the elimination of the capital tax levied against the financial services industry. This tax creates an economic distortion by singling out one industry for a higher, more punitive rate of taxation, and it sends a very strong and negative signal to potential investors in this sector."* (Canadian Bankers Association).

### Consumption and Personal Income Taxes

A key theme heard by the Committee was for the government to judiciously monitor both the rates of consumption taxes — particularly, the social services tax (PST) — and personal income taxes. Though calls for cuts in income tax rates were somewhat absent from the public hearings, we received many written and on-line submissions indicating a preference for government to examine individual tax relief delivered through the income tax reductions.

The Committee acknowledges a public debate on how best to provide tax relief to individual consumers. We would ask government to continue to examine the most efficient way to return some of the province's projected surpluses to individual consumers. This debate is highlighted in the sample of suggestions provided below:

> *"Government should improve the living standards of BC families and close the gap between BC's real personal disposable income per capita and the national average by returning excess revenue to taxpayers through personal income tax cuts or a reduction in the PST."* (Retail Council of Canada).
>
> *"We recommend a three-pronged starter plan for British Columbia: eliminate the top two income brackets, bump the basic personal amount to $15,000 and eliminate all income tax credits, exemptions, refunds, and deductions."* (Canadian Taxpayers Federation).
>
> *"We feel there is the fiscal capacity to reduce the PST, following on a GST reduction to six percent recently and what we believe will be further cuts at the federal level coming from both the income side and the business tax side."* (Retail BC).

### Social Services Tax on Legal Fees

Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that government examine the removal of the social services tax on legal fees. We have again heard requests from the legal community to remove this tax, as it both hinders economic competitiveness and acts as an impediment to justice. Here is a sample of the submissions we received:

*"Lawyers get charged sales tax on our legal fees. We're the only profession that pays sales tax. It's inequitable, unfair to us and unfair to our clients, and I beseech you to abolish this unfair taxation."* (Garth Evans, Vancouver).

*"The social services tax on legal services is inefficient as it is not only a sales tax on consumption, but also a sales tax on capital investment. It's a drag on B.C.'s competitiveness. The tax inflates the cost of doing business in B.C. relative to other jurisdictions."* (Canadian Bar Association – British Columbia Branch).

### Tax Harmonization

Again this year, we heard repeated calls from the business community for the provincial government to examine the issue of harmonizing the provincial social services tax with the federal goods and services tax. We heard that harmonization would produce significant cost savings to small businesses with a reduction in paperwork; reduce complications that arise from separate auditing bodies; decrease confusion over exemptions provided by the social services tax; and provide the consumer with a better picture of the cost of purchases. Here is a sample of what we heard this year:

*"Currently, B.C. businesses require separate recordkeeping, reporting and remittances for the GST and PST, creating unnecessary costs for accounting and administration. In addition, businesses deal with two sets of auditors enforcing compliance at the federal and provincial levels. One solution would be to have a harmonization of the provincial sales tax with the federal goods and services tax to eliminate a lot of inefficiencies in the system."* (Tyce Carle-Thiesson Chartered Accountants).

*"The lack of harmonized sales tax translates into three disadvantages for businesses vis-à-vis Alberta. We would like to see a comprehensive review that examines the costs and benefits of harmonizing. It should be within the scope of such a study to review and consider a made-in-B.C. value added tax, modeled after the GST, as an alternate to harmonization."* (Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia).

*"Now, perhaps, focus should be on reducing the inefficiency of administration by moving to a harmonized tax. Inefficiency in administration could be reduced by reduced discrepancies in the application of those taxes, because currently, the application of GST and PST are not harmonious with respect to the same products."* (Grant Thornton LLP).

## Recommendations

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Vigilantly monitor personal, corporate and consumption taxes to ensure British Columbia remains a competitive and desirable place to live and invest, including
    - taxes paid by corporations,
    - the capital tax on financial services,
    - the Social Service Tax (PST), and
    - personal income tax rates,

  and again examine the viability of harmonization of the social services tax and the federal goods and services tax, with a view ensuring that there be no net negative impact on consumers.
- Significantly increase the first-time home-buyer property transfer tax exemption price and consider eliminating the one percent property transfer tax on the first $200,000 on the purchase price, with the view of making home ownership more affordable.
- Give consideration to applying the proceeds of the social services tax on legal fees to funding legal aid services.

## New or Expanded Programs and Services

With respect to the broad category of new or expanded programs and services, the Committee observed a noteworthy disconnect between what we heard at our 15 public hearings and the trend we observed in our on-line response forms. On the one hand, we heard of significant demand for the expansion of particular programs from witnesses at the public hearings as well as in the written submissions — most of which fit nicely into the other priority areas provided in the consultation paper questionnaire. On the other hand, the on-line responses ranked "new or expanded programs and services" as the lowest priority by a significant margin.

To some extent, the results to this question are not so surprising. When asking the public to rank priorities, one should expect responses that favour priorities that are stated clearly and have actions attached — such as reducing debt, protecting the environment, or providing faster access to health care.

Nonetheless, the Committee did hear some unique suggestions pertaining to more resources for specific new or expanded programs. We were particularly intrigued by the potential benefits that could accrue to the province by making increased investments in the promotion of British Columbia's agricultural products as well as additional investments to promote arts and culture in British Columbia.

### Promoting B.C. Agriculture

In the submissions we received from British Columbia's agricultural and food-processing representatives, we heard of a need for the government to invest in the promotion of British Columbia's agricultural products in line with the government's commitments to promoting healthier lifestyles and supporting domestic food. The agricultural sector employs more than 230,000 British Columbians in the production, processing and distribution of safe and secure agricultural products for both B.C. consumption and for exports all over the world. With over $35 billion in revenues, the Committee learned that the agriculture sector contributes 2.3 percent of the provincial gross domestic product.

The Committee heard support for the Provincial Agricultural Plan currently under development. However, witnesses also expressed a desire for the plan to include a coordinated and comprehensive marketing plan that highlights both the positive health and environmental benefits associated with provincially-grown foods. In addition, the agricultural community requested that the Provincial Agricultural Plan promotes the security of British Columbia's food supply; economic, social, and environmental sustainability; as well as the safety and quality associated with food production in British Columbia. Below are some of the submissions we received on this topic.

> *"Marketing programs are needed. We are coming up to the 2010 Olympics without a clear plan to promote B.C. agriculture or B.C. goods and services. The real marketing opportunity will be from now until two years after the Olympics. Since we have so far failed to launch, this opportunity is being squandered. Industries such as our own are just too small to afford purchasing the logo and the rights to be suppliers to the Olympics."* (B.C. Fruit Growers Association).

*"... We feel that provincial reinvestment in a provincial branding program such as the former Buy B.C. program — a very successful program — is something that needs to be focused on."* (B.C. Agriculture Council).

*"As you know, for the 2010 Opportunities Initiative, branding was identified as the number one priority... We absolutely must use a professional brander to lead that exercise. We know this works. In the tourism industry, Super, Natural B.C. is a technical branding product that stood us in good stead for what must be 15 years. We can do that with foods as well. It only has to be professionally done, not cobbled together."* (BC Food Processors Association).

### Arts Funding

Requests for additional funding to the arts community were prominent during this year's budget consultation process. In nearly every community we visited, we heard how the arts play an important role in delivering provincial priorities — from creating employment opportunities, to promoting diversity, as well as fostering community spirit.

Comparatively speaking, the Committee believes that the combined efforts of the arts community in British Columbia present a compelling argument for a significant increase to the core funding provided to the B.C. Arts Council to support arts and culture in B.C. leading up to the Olympic Games. Here is just a sample of what we heard from the many witnesses that appeared before the Committee on this topic:

*"To ensure an adequate investment in sustainable communities throughout British Columbia, we request all-party support for a significantly increased investment in arts and culture, including museums, through the British Columbia Arts Council in the 2007-2009 budgets. Increasing access to arts and cultural programs for youth and emerging artists in smaller centres will reap important economic and social returns to communities like Nelson and to the taxpayers of B.C."* (British Columbia Arts Council).

*"In the north, distance has its disadvantage when it comes to arts and cultural programs. Many arts and culture programs are run by volunteers. When house prices demand double incomes, or poverty drives people to despair, there won't be much energy left for people to volunteer. Increased funding to arts and culture could create more jobs as people could be hired to run programs and more programs could be made available to more people."* (Prince Rupert Community Arts Council).

## Recommendations

### The Committee recommends that the government:

- Examine the feasibility of providing marketing assistance to British Columbia's agricultural producers in light of the government's healthy living strategy.
- Increase funding to the B.C. Arts Council to enhance arts and culture in the province.

## Reducing Borrowing and Debt

One of the public's highest priorities was for a significant reduction in the total amount of debt incurred by the province. While presentations made to the Committee congratulated the government on the $1.5 billion reduction in the provincial debt this year, we again heard repeated requests for the government to introduce a formal debt management plan that would provide for a significant write down of the provincial debt each and every year.

Based on our on-line consultation, while the public has not given due consideration to a formalized and legislated debt repayment plan, it is clear that there exists great demand for a significant portion of uncommitted surplus revenues and unused forecast allowances to be committed to paying off the provincial debt.

The Committee notes a clear shift in the public's opinions on British Columbia's debt. Although we are unable to quantify this shift, given the differences in how questions concerning the province's debt have been phrased year-over-year, it is evident that more and more British Columbians are concerned about the level of debt being passed on to future generations. Here is a sampling of what we heard:

### Debt Repayment

> *"The priority should be debt reduction. Long-term, this releases more money into programs."* (Duane Harder, Vernon).
>
> *"It is our position that prudent fiscal management be maintained and the expected surplus be applied to debt reduction. The benefit of this debt reduction is that future interest savings will free up moneys for future reinvestment in the economy."* (Williams Lake Chamber of Commerce).
>
> *"Our two top priorities... are tax reduction and debt reduction. While there are other spending recommendations made in this presentation, there can be no sustainable fiscal management of this province without paying attention to these two priorities first."* (Richmond Chamber of Commerce)
>
> *"We think that the priority of our government should be to reduce the debt whenever possible. We certainly think that a debt free province would be for the good of everyone, - us and our children."* (Steve Glover, Celista).
>
> *"Before we go off spending the surplus we should have a solid plan to eliminate our debt over the medium term to make sure our children don't have to pay for the debt we have created over the last couple decades."* (Roger Mayer, Keremeos).

## Recommendation

### The Committee recommends that the government:

- Continue to allocate surplus forecast allowances and a portion of uncommitted revenues towards repayment of the provincial debt. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the government continue with its plans to reduce the provincial debt-to-GDP ratio as specified in the budget consultation paper.

## Protecting People and Property

Relatively speaking, the Committee received relatively few submissions relating to issues of protecting people and property. Of the submissions received, the primary focus was on the area of rural policing costs.

### Rural Policing

One area of concern identified by representatives of smaller, rural communities was uncertainty over rising policing costs. Municipal representatives — citing trepidation over changes to the structure of regional policing models — expressed concerns over how areas with smaller tax bases would be able to cover the escalation in policing costs. Some of the comments were:

> *"We need to understand the changes made. Most districts with a population under 5,000 pay more for their policing. We need to understand whether the province is going to charge us, what are some alternatives to what the province has proposed, and what is the impact of the policing model on our industrial tax base."* (District of Chetwynd).
>
> *"Regional police in the city of Fort St. John has been working hard in advancing the regional policing initiative, an opportunity to share human resources as well as infrastructure, buildings and equipment. I encourage the province to work with the people in various regions of the province to help build solutions that will work for them and make allowances for the northeast B.C. regional policing model."* (City of Fort St. John).

## Educating our Children and Young Adults

As in previous years, the broad theme of education ranked highly amongst the public's priorities. This year, the budget consultation questionnaire grouped kindergarten-to-grade twelve education in with post-secondary education offered by B.C.'s universities and colleges. Unlike last year, in which the Committee received hundreds of submissions on how to improve elementary and secondary school education, the majority of presentations this year focussed on early assessment funding, child care, English-as-a-second-language funding, and post-secondary education. An example of the type of submissions we received is exemplified by the comment we received below:

> *"The budget should be spent more on education for everyone, not just children and teens."* (Jessica Purkis, Parksville).

### Early Assessment Funding

With respect to British Columbia's younger students, we heard of a pressing need for the government to provide greater resources in the area of early assessment for children with special needs. In response, it is the Committee's strong opinion that the government should commit the necessary resources requested by the British Columbia Association of Child Development and Intervention to alleviate current assessment waitlists. Furthermore, the Committee would also like the government to ensure that sufficient resources are made available for assessing children outside the major urban regions. Below are some of the comments we received on this topic:

> *"The B.C. government should allocate $25 to $30 million dollars to address and eliminate the waitlists for services and programs for children and youth with special needs. Additional funding of at least $7 million should be allocated for the hiring of psychologists and other mental health professionals to address the diagnostic and behavioural needs of children and youth with special needs."* (British Columbia Association of Child Development and Intervention).
>
> *"Currently children in many districts must wait for three or more years for an assessment or diagnosis. If students need special supports to succeed, but cannot get them because of a limit on the assessments, then those children face a very real loss that is difficult to ever make up."* (British Columbia Teachers' Federation).
>
> *"Almost one in three school-age children with developmental or behaviour disorders may be unidentified as having special needs in our public schools. They are awaiting assessments or coping unaided. Those who can pay are increasingly in private schools, and others are all too often at home because schools just can't cope with them. Thousands of children are not getting special education or early intervention services and supports that will make or break their success in adulthood."* (B.C. Federation of Families Society).
>
> *"I see the failures of the system in identifying these children early and in helping them early. I can promise you that by spending the dollars on prevention we're going to save a lot more…"* (Dr. Jannie du Plessis, Terrace).
>
> *"If early supportive and intervention services are not provided, these children will not gain the lifeskills they need to become an integral and productive part of society and*

*in the long-term will require more expensive services from the social/health system as adults."* (Melisa Chow, Burnaby)

## Child Care

One area of concern for many people focused around access to child care. We heard from witnesses of the need for affordable, accessible, and quality child care. Some suggestions offered during the presentations made to the Committee highlighted requests for stable funding and called for the government to articulate a province-wide strategy that provides for diversity in child care arrangements. Below is a sample of the comments we received:

*"With or without federal funds, B.C. is responsible for building a quality child care system that meets the needs of families, children and communities. The first step we need from government is to hear a firm commitment to maintain the child care funding in next year's budget and beyond."* (B.C. Child Care Advocacy Forum).

## English-as-a-Second-Language

The Committee received a number of submissions expressing concern over the current state of English-as-a-second-language (ESL) funding. Several witnesses requested funding to provide more intensive programs as well as extending the cap on funded teaching of ESL from five to seven years. Here are some of the suggestions we heard:

*"Use targeted funding to support publicly delivered ESL programs for adult learners. We're not going to get these people into the economy as active taxpaying members until they can get the kind of education that is required to participate in and compete in today's knowledge-based economy."* (University College of the Fraser Valley Faculty and Staff Association).

*"Make adult ESL language training more available up to minimum level six, … (and) increase funding for ESL and settlement supports within the public school system."* (First Call B.C. Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition).

## University and Colleges

Again this year, individuals representing different associations within British Columbia's colleges and universities made appearances before the Committee to discuss a myriad of issues in post-secondary education. Several issues in particular struck the Committee in this year's consultation process: the need for the government to seriously consider additional funding for graduate students and graduate student spaces; further expansion of apprenticeship training programs; the removal of fees from adult basic education; as well as an examination of the rules preventing people on social assistance from pursuing higher education. We heard calls for the government to consider lower tuition fees as well as calls from post-secondary institutions for the government to provide assistance to reduce the inflationary costs associated with new capital projects.

### *Graduate Studies*

A common theme we heard from university presidents, faculty, and student associations was the need for government to provide additional resources to encourage and support graduate students obtaining degrees at British Columbia's universities and colleges. We learned that

British Columbia is falling behind jurisdictions such as Alberta and Ontario in terms of recruiting and retaining the brightest minds emerging out of our university system. We were alerted to the fact that both competing jurisdictions were rapidly expanding both the number of funded graduate spaces in a variety of disciplines, and enriching scholarships and grants provided to promising and innovative researchers.

University-affiliated organizations appearing before the Committee offered two suggestions for bolstering graduate student education in British Columbia. First, the witnesses recommended that the government work with the universities to create and fund 500 new graduate spaces each year for the next four years. In order to attract students to fill these positions, witnesses suggested that the government create a graduate student scholarship and fellowship program to assist in defraying the research and tuition costs associated with the pursuit of graduate degrees. Below is a sample of what we heard:

> *"University research laboratories and classrooms would grind to a halt without graduate students.... We have fallen further behind since Ontario and Alberta created new graduate student spaces and new scholarship programs to attract the best and the brightest. We are recommending an increase of 500 spaces per year over the next four years."* (Confederation of University Faculty Associations of B.C.).
>
> *"In order to remain competitive with other provinces, and most importantly, to provide a minimum level of necessary support to graduate students, the Coalition of B.C. Graduate Programs is requesting that 800 graduate scholarship places be opened by the Provincial Government, to be provided to students of top academic merit. When British Columbia sends the message that it is unwilling or unable to adequately fund education at this crucial level of expertise, it deprives the people of this province of the world's most valuable resource: its human capital."* (B.C. Coalition of Graduate Students).

***Skills-Training Spaces***

A recurring message the Committee heard from British Columbia's colleges was the need for additional investment in trades and apprenticeship training, particularly in colleges serving populations outside the lower mainland. Whereas student associations repeatedly called for the government to re-allocate the money set aside for training tax credits, the institutions themselves put forward a plausible case for the government to not only expand the number of spaces available to students, but also to invest in upgrading outdated training equipment. We also heard the government should give consideration to further promote opportunities for trades training for aboriginal students.

Furthermore, some of the post-secondary education institutions also presented a request for the government to review the funding formula for trades and technology programs to permit a more efficient allotment of limited trades training spaces. Some of the comments we heard included:

> *"The range of trades training in the northwest lags behind all other areas of the province and must be increased. Many future trades people are leaving the area to access trades training, and a significant proportion are not returning. If we are to build capacity in the northwest, we need to come up with policy that will enable this*

*potential workforce to get the education and training they need to work in the northwest."* (Northwest Community College).

*"We also believe a special aboriginal trades strategy should be established to ensure that aboriginal apprentices comprise a larger portion of the total apprentices in the trade system. We at the College of New Caledonia are anxious to work with government, the Industry Training Authority, industry and the aboriginal community in developing such a strategy."* (College of New Caledonia).

*"The need to both replace existing skills and adapt to new demands of changing technology and a changing economy will intensify and increase demands for more post-secondary education skills and training."* (Federation of Post-Secondary Educators).

***Adult Basic Education***

The consensus among the participants who spoke to the issue of Adult Basic Education was for the government to provide additional funding to the colleges and universities to offset the costs associated with the delivery of these programs. The Committee heard that since Adult Basic Education lost funding from the province, tuition fees applied to the programs delivered at some colleges have become prohibitive. The comments we heard include:

*"The vast majority of Adult Basic Education students enrol in courses to better their lives by upgrading to qualify for some form of post-secondary education or higher quality employment. Attaching an unaffordable price tag is not only unnecessary but also detrimental to the future of the province's economy"* (Thompson Rivers Students Union).

*"Funding for ABE and literacy programs must be increased in order to reflect rural and remote realities."* (College of New Caledonia, Lakes District Campus).

***Education and Social Assistance***

An additional area pertaining to upgrading raised by some witnesses was the apparent contradiction that prohibits those receiving social assistance from seeking post-secondary education. Some witnesses noted that this prohibition serves as a barrier for qualified individuals legitimately seeking higher education from taking university or college programs. Here is what we heard:

*"Meaningful long-term training and education have to be offered so that low-income people have access to stable, well-paying jobs that actually get them out of poverty. That requires rescinding the rules that currently prevent people on social assistance from being post-secondary students."* (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, B.C. Office).

*"People on social assistance are faced with the "choice" of collecting social assistance or upgrading their education. I submit that this is not a choice that recipients of social assistance should be required to make. Make upgrading fees free, and continue to provide assistance while the person is studying."* (Malaspina Faculty Association).

***Tuition Fees***

The Committee received several coordinated presentations from student organizations requesting the government consider reducing tuition fees assessed for post-secondary education for the upcoming school year. The witnesses claimed that a decrease in tuition fees may create an additional incentive for young people to enter or complete their post-secondary education. A sample of the request made by these organizations is as follows:

> *"A fully funded 10-percent reduction in tuition fees would be a large step in the right direction, an investment that will hold significant return for all British Columbians. This investment will go a long way towards relieving the significant financial burdens placed on students."* (Thompson Rivers University Students' Union).

***Capital Projects***

A final area of concern raised by some witnesses was over the rapid inflation of costs associated with capital project development in all areas of the province. Expressing concerns that the rapid escalation in costs may curtail the development of planned facility upgrades and expansions, a request was made for the government to consider applying available federal post-secondary funding to offset some or all of the escalating costs. This suggestion is highlighted below:

> *"The government must give urgent attention to addressing an equitable share of increased construction costs for projects where inflation assumptions were underestimated at the time of project approval. These cost pressures should be considered as a "first call" against the $132.3 million the Government of Canada has set aside for British Columbia in Budget 2006 to alleviate "immediate pressures" in post-secondary education."* (University Presidents' Council).

## Recommendations

### The Committee recommends that the government:

- Immediately allocate necessary resources to eliminate the waitlists for assessments of children and youth with special needs. Furthermore, the government should provide funding for a comprehensive pre-screening program for all children.
- Develop a province-wide strategy on affordable, accessible, and quality child care options for British Columbians, and consider providing additional funds for child care.
- Consider increasing the resources to expand both the programs and program supports available for students to achieve higher levels of proficiency in English-as- a-second-language in order to be competitive in the workforce.
- Consider providing additional funding for graduate students, graduate student spaces, as well as the establishment of a competitive scholarship and a financial aid program available for graduate students.
- Examine the funding formula to post-secondary institutions for trades and technology programs, with the intent to optimizing the availability of these programs. In addition, the government should continue to provide resources to permit the expansion of apprenticeship

training programs within the education system, with a particular emphasis on providing additional opportunities for aboriginals.

- Increase funding to allow for the elimination of fees charged for Adult Basic Education.
- Consider reviewing B.C.'s income assistance policy to enable income assistance recipients to access further education opportunities.
- Ensure that tuition fees at B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions remain competitive vis-à-vis other Canadian jurisdictions.
- Re-assess all post-secondary capital project plans and consider applying federal monies to offset the rising costs of post-secondary capital projects.

## Faster Access to Health Services

Like education, the broad category of health services ranked highly on the public's agenda. However, despite the volume of responses indicating health care as a top-two priority, the Committee received few specific on-line and written responses indicating how to improve health care delivery, other than by simply spending more money. Indeed, we received a fair number of submissions expressing the opinion that future provincial budgets should allocate less financial resources to the health care system. This debate is exemplified in the following submissions:

> *"We should spend more on health care - access to services. In particular, access to emergency care and surgery should be improved."* (Karen Golden, Delta).
>
> *"Spend more on health care - particularly diagnostic equipment and testing along with trained people to do them."* (Lynn Morrison, Chemainus).
>
> *"We have to spend less on healthcare as it is currently conceived and delivered."* (Kathryn Barker, Mayne Island).
>
> *"We should spend less on health care. 38% of our budget is extremely excessive."* (Brandy Schmidt, Langley).

The Committee did, however, receive several interesting submissions on the topics of hospice care, assisted living and home care services. We also received many submissions indicating concern over prospects for diminished ambulance services in rural areas.

### Hospice Care

The Finance Committee heard requests for increased funding for hospice houses. Most participants provided personal testimony to the quality of care that they had received. Many of these people were residents of Prince George, who were concerned with the potential loss of funding for their local hospice house. The potential of hospices to ease the pressure on hospitals was indicated in numerous submissions.

> *"Providing affordable, high-quality home care and hospice palliative end-of-life care to all British Columbians through the publicly-funded health care system can be cost effective, and is the right thing to do."* (Canadian Cancer Society, BC & Yukon Division).
>
> *"I feel the benefits of a hospice house outweigh the costs. For instance, hospice care decreases wait times in hospitals, reduces patient and family stress, costs them less than hospital care and means people have a choice and a voice in their care. Please ensure the funding for all hospice houses in BC is increased to cover the costs to operate."* (R. Sawatsky, Prince George).

### Home Care and Home Support Services for Seniors

A recurring theme heard by the Committee was the need for increased funding to meet the continuum of care needs for a growing population of seniors. While these proposals ranged from an increase in affordable housing to tax incentives for those who keep themselves in good health, the majority of the requests were for increases in home care and home support services. Several witnesses explained that providing an array of services will result in a reduction in

seniors' hospitalisations, thus inducing savings in the healthcare system and enhancing the quality of life for seniors.

> *"Home support should include housekeeping, meal preparation, bathing, grooming, emotional and psychological support and some socialization. Also - and absolutely vital - community health workers should care for the same person on a regular basis. The workers can then monitor the client's health and morale and have corrective action taken if any deterioration is observed."* (Seniors' Advocates Section, BC Old Age Pensioners Organization, Branch, No. 191).
>
> *"With the challenging demographics of the province, there is the evolving need to address the current and future needs of independent, affordable housing for seniors, as well as assisted-living, complex care, respite care and palliative care beds in each community. It is a travesty that communities do not have the facilities and resources to care for the seniors in their own home communities."* (City of Fort St. John).
>
> *"I find that the seniors require much more of the "home care" end of things to keep them safe in their own homes and out of the health system."* (Helen Ansell, Vernon).

### Rural Ambulance Service

The Committee heard from witnesses in the interior and northern B.C. who were concerned about ambulance service in their region. Many expressed fear that the amalgamation of ambulance service areas had placed the quality of the service at risk.

> *"Our ambulance service is in jeopardy from time to time. I would certainly appreciate it if this committee can make some recommendation. The people on the call-in list are waiting to be called. Some extra funding could be made available for those people."* (Surinderpal Rathor, Williams Lake).
>
> *"Centralization of specialized health care makes sense to a degree but; it is creating a crisis with BC Ambulance service especially in the Interior. Ambulances are on the road longer and farther, and thus unable to respond to emergency calls at their home towns."* (Bruce Fisher, Kimberley).

## Recommendations

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Increase funding to hospice care in an effort to provide quality end-of-life care that will ease the pressure on hospitals.
- Offer a full range of home care and home support services for seniors to ensure that a continuum of services is in place to meet the needs of a growing population of seniors.
- Consider increasing funding to the B.C. Ambulance Service, especially in interior and northern B.C., to ensure ambulances are able to adequately respond to emergency calls.

## Improving Assistance for People in Need

With respect to improving assistance for people in need, two important themes emerged during our public consultations. First, we heard support for the implementation and the provision of an appropriate level of funding to support a comprehensive mental health and addictions plan that provides treatment and assistance to all British Columbians in need of these services. Second, we again heard this year from organizations advocating increased funding be provided to Community Living BC, the Crown agency responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. We also heard calls for the government to enhance services provided to women in need of assistance to ensure safety for themselves and for their families.

### Mental Health

The Committee received several submissions that called for the government to develop, and implement a wide-ranging mental health and addictions plan, including providing support for the full implementation of British Columbia's youth mental health plan. Their suggestions were as follows:

> *"We fully support the Premier's goal of building the best system of support in Canada for people with disability. However, we as a province must make a commitment to developing a comprehensive mental health and addictions plan with targets, timelines and regular full and public reporting on progress. We also recommend that the 2007-2008 budget will be for people with mental illness and their families."* (Canadian Mental Health Association, British Columbia Division).
>
> *"We have to put mental health at the forefront… If I had a choice where my tax dollars went, I would want to put more into the social services that are going to help build strong communities and help members of our community lead healthy lives…."* (Tsilhqot'in Justice Program).

### Community Living BC

Advocacy organizations for the developmentally disabled and their families provided the Committee with several submissions indicating requests for additional increases in the budget of Community Living BC. In particular, witnesses suggested that additional services need to be provided for youth leaving the school system, residential supports and services for those with developmental disabilities as well as funding to address service waitlists. These are some of the suggestions we heard:

> *"The creation of Community Living BC was well intended, but its responsibilities have increased considerably and we are concerned that its funding has not kept pace. In order to meet its goals, CLBC and through it, the service providers and disabled citizens of B.C., must be provided with adequate resources. In particular, we are concerned about funding being available for the continuation of services as children transition into adult services when they turn 19."* (Gateway Society – Services for Persons with Autism).
>
> *"Provide more funding for Community Living BC. We have some significant challenges in the specific demographics of people with disabilities. We have huge*

*numbers of kids who are getting diagnosed with autism, we have large increases in FASD which have real impact on the need for services and, happily, people are healthier and they're living longer. We are urging you to invest $75 million next year in Community Living BC to try to get ahead strategically on the crisis that it continues to face."* (B.C. Association for Community Living).

*"The money allotted for adults with developmental disabilities is not sufficient for the numbers and the demands. I urge you to help speed up this process of accessing individualized funding. The programs that are in place are under-funded and have long wait lists."* (Barbara Laird, Vancouver).

### Women's Services

The Committee heard from many witnesses about the need for additional services to assist women in need. More specifically, we received a number of submissions outlining the importance of providing funding to agencies that provide integrated support services for women, as well as the importance of specific services, such as sexual assault crisis programs. Here are some of the comments we received:

*"Women need one place to go where they can get all the services they potentially need: housing, legal services, child care, income supplements, etc. This way, the service providers can work together, the right hand can know what the left hand is doing, and there would be no duplication of service."* (Jane Birkbeck, Natalie Lidster and Lauren McCusker, Kamloops).

*"We are seeing women bring increasingly complex and unique issues…(such as) those related to mental health issues, AD and D issues, poverty and homelessness. … In 2005, approximately 12 million dollars was injected into shelters, counseling and outreach programs for women which was an admirable boost to service provision in these areas. Accountability measures are in place or in the process of being put in place for these programs."* (Tri-City Women's Resource Society).

## Recommendations:

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Provide funding for a comprehensive mental health and addictions plan.
- Consider additional funding to Community Living BC for the developmentally disabled and their families, including support for youth as they transition into adulthood, and residential supports and services.
- Consider providing a full range services for women through an integrated service delivery model that may include, but is not limited to, sexual assault crisis counselling, women's shelters, and public outreach programs that assist in providing women information on the variety of services available for women in need.

## Building Infrastructure Like Roads, Schools and Hospitals

One policy area identified by the participants in the budget consultation process was the need to invest prudently in the province's infrastructure. While the Committee heard some specific calls for targeted investments in expanding or revitalizing hospital and educational facilities, the bulk of the submissions we received centred on transportation-related infrastructure. With respect to transportation, we observed three key themes: support for the Gateway program; requests for additional funding to build or repair highway infrastructure in rural areas; and demands for the province to increase funding for both transit infrastructure and transit services.

### Gateway Program

This year, we observed an increasing level of support for the government's Gateway transportation projects for the lower mainland. Many respondents indicated a preference for the government to "get on with it" and begin construction on the various aspects of the plan. Here is a sample of what we heard as a Committee:

> *"The Pacific gateway strategy is a great start, but it does not extend far enough into the Fraser Valley. At a minimum, the Gateway strategy should go to the east boundary of Abbotsford and, in reality, should go to the east boundary of Chilliwack and beyond."* (City of Abbotsford).
>
> *"The province must also continue to improve its transportation infrastructure so that our products can efficiently find their way to market. While we may be sitting here in the Cariboo, the Pacific gateway and other initiatives designed to reduce rail, port and road congestion in the lower mainland are an important issue for us."* (Tolko Industries).
>
> *"We recommend that you press forward with the Gateway program and continue to work with the stakeholder groups such as the Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley regional districts, TransLink, local governments and others to ensure the Gateway program ties into existing infrastructure throughout the province and doesn't just go and stop in Langley."* (Fraser Valley Real Estate Board).
>
> *"Twinning the Port Mann bridge is of the highest priority!!! The lower mainland's population is growing quickly, and will continue to do that. We need to move goods and people."* (Trevor French, Aldergrove).
>
> *"Over the next five years, our area of Surrey must receive adequate funding to further develop needed infrastructure, especially road and bridge projects under the Gateway Program."* (Ian MacPherson, Surrey).
>
> *"Spending on capital projects including major roadways such as the Gateway project must proceed."* (Kevin Evancic, Maple Ridge).

### Rural Highways and Roads

A second priority identified by witnesses and submissions to the Committee from outside the lower mainland and Victoria were requests for increased maintenance and highway construction in rural areas of the province. We heard of a need to rebuild major provincial highways because of the rapid deterioration of road beds due to increased oil and gas, logging, and other industrial activity. Here are some of the suggestions:

*"We are advocating that the budget have additional funding to support the forestry and public road infrastructure through this high volume period (due to Mountain Pine Beetle damaged wood) that will take us well into 2013 and beyond. A side issue to this are safety issues as a great number of the roads being utilized were never designed to handle the volumes that they are currently doing."* (Share Cariboo/ Chilcotin Resources).

*"The reality of a resource-based economy is that to produce and transport our commodities to market, we need a strong infrastructure in place. Continuing investment in infrastructure, such as highway improvements, is necessary. It will aid the transportation of our products to market, and it will enhance and encourage tourism throughout the province."* (Williams Lake Chamber of Commerce).

*"The city of Prince George has an immediate need for road and bridge rehabilitation funding. The city recommends the community works agreement be amended to include rehabilitation of roads and bridges for tier 1 communities as an eligible project category."* (City of Prince George).

*"There is a need to develop the infrastructure to access resources and capture the booming global commodity market. Specific projects include the Stewart Omineca Resource Road development, the 800-kilometre road crescent between Highways 37 and 97 in northern B.C., and the Cranberry connection road."* (Terrace & District Chamber of Commerce).

*"I think the biggest thing where we can spend some of that money we could save is on our road infrastructure. From where I sit, being involved in the transportation industry, the single-best thing we've done is increase and enhance our road infrastructure to allow legal axles to be transported throughout the area year round. That's done as much as anything to stabilize our drilling season."* (Bob Fedderly, Fort St. John).

### Transit Infrastructure and Community Transit Funding

A new message that we heard this year was for government to evaluate its funding commitments towards mass transit infrastructure as well as funding for transit in B.C.'s communities. The calls for increased investment in transit infrastructure appeared in tandem with the high priority placed on the environment in this year's budget consultation paper. We also note that the calls for increased transit funding were not just emerging from the on-line consultation process: rather, there appears to be widespread support from municipal governments representing, both large and small communities, as well as from the business community in certain regions. Here is a sample of what we heard:

*"TransLink and Greater Vancouver municipalities would welcome an opportunity to begin a dialogue with the provincial government on how to secure a sustainable, reliable source of funding that allows for long-term transportation planning in the region. This would build upon the significant infrastructure investments recently committed by the provincial and federal governments."* (Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority).

*"Without rapid transit accessibility to and from the northeast sector, movement will be substantially limited. This will tremendously reduce the opportunities for our businesses to benefit by the 2010 Olympics."* (Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce).

*"Transportation is a major issue at the local, regional and provincial levels and we must all work in partnership with the federal government to ensure funding is objectively and strategically focused on areas of the greatest need for the well being of the province. Transit connections and improved service have been identified for our region and for the entire Okanagan."* (City of Kelowna).

*"Resolve the regional inequities concerning transit. Abbotsford-Mission regional transit must rely on provincial grants (which have been arbitrarily capped), while the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Capital Regional District receive a share of the provincial gas tax. A known, dependable amount of annual funding is required to support the transit system."* (City of Abbotsford)

## Recommendations

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Proceed with the construction of infrastructure projects related to the Gateway Program.
- Consider allocating more resources to rehabilitation of transportation infrastructure in rural areas, including the maintenance of road beds impacted by industrial and logging activity.
- Consider increasing investment in both public transit infrastructure and funding for BC Transit. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the government continue to work closely with the federal, regional, and local governments to enable long-term transportation and transit planning supported by reliable sources of funding.

## Financing Needed Infrastructure Projects

***Question 3: British Columbia is growing. We must build and upgrade infrastructure such as roads, schools and hospitals to meet the needs of a growing population and a strong economy.***

***The Province borrows money to help fund new constructions projects. How much we build affects how much we need to borrow and the Province's debt.***

***What choices would you make between investing in infrastructure and managing British Columbia's debt?***

***Please check the appropriate box below to indicate the statement you agree with most.***

- ***It's important to invest in our infrastructure, regardless of how much we need to borrow.***
- ***It's important to invest in our infrastructure, but we need to limit our borrowing and keep debt affordable.***
- ***We shouldn't borrow any money; instead, we should pay higher taxes for infrastructure projects.***
- ***We shouldn't borrow any money; instead, we should postpone or cancel infrastructure projects.***
- ***We shouldn't borrow any money; instead, we should cut programs and services to fund new infrastructure projects.***

Like last year, the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper* asked British Columbians to provide their opinions on how to pay to build and upgrade infrastructure such as roads, schools and hospitals to meet the needs of a growing population and a strong economy. And like last year, we heard a clear message in the public hearings, written submissions, on-line and flyer responses that British Columbians believe that it is important to invest in our infrastructure, but we need to limit our borrowing and keep debt affordable. Some of the comments we received are provided below:

> *"With regard to debt reduction and infrastructure investment, the Surrey Board of Trade agrees with the premise that… the government must consider directing surpluses, along with all unused reserves, in such a way as to avoid increasing operational budgets. Investment in infrastructure is considered by the board and seen as equivalent to debt reduction and, indeed, may produce greater benefits to the province in the long term."* (Surrey Board of Trade).
>
> *"While this investment is necessary to address a long history of underinvestment, government must ensure that debt remains a priority of this government."* (British Columbia Chamber of Commerce).

### Recommendation

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Continue to make infrastructure investments, while maintaining an affordable debt-to-GDP ratio.

# Public's Other Comments

*Question 4: Other comments and suggestions regarding your choices for Balanced Budget 2007.*

In this open-ended question, the public was asked to make recommendations on a variety of other topics which either directly or indirectly affect the fiscal planning priorities of government. We received a wide variety of responses that do not lend themselves easily to categorization under the priorities identified in Question Two. These topics range from calls for a vaccination program to prevent cervical cancer; a request for the government to assist in the development of a registered disability savings plan; to requests for the provincial government to consider lobbying the federal government to remove restrictions on exporting timber from private forest lands.

## Vaccination Programs

The committee heard a fascinating and compelling presentation from representatives from Merck Frosst in Prince Rupert concerning vaccinations to combat cervical cancer and gastroenteritis. In both cases, the witnesses outlined the tremendous costs associated with treating these diseases in British Columbia: $50 million per year in the treatment of the human papillomavirus and thousands of emergency room visits to treat gastroenteritis in children. The witnesses recommended that British Columbia introduce a vaccination program targeting these viruses.

This Committee is not in a position to evaluate the effectiveness, or able to conduct a proper cost-benefit analysis of the information presented by the witnesses. However, their vaccinations sounded promising in preventing two debilitating and treatable health concerns:

> *"We were asked by the medical community to come up to the north and present it because incidence of cervical cancer is between six to ten times more prevalent in aboriginal populations. It also has very much higher rates in women of Asian descent because they don't feel comfortable going to a male physician and taking a Pap smear test. It's also common in northern communities, in general, due to the access. We do urge you to look at these vaccination programs not as an expense but as an investment that will have a major pay-back in improvement in human lives, in the elevation of resources from those needy health care resources, and it will improve productivity of our societies and our communities here in B.C."* (Merck Frosst Canada).

## Registered Disabilities Saving Plan

At our Vancouver public hearing, we heard of an interesting proposal that would allow for families of children with disabilities to set money aside in tax-deferred investments to support these individuals following the death of their immediate families. This proposal is outlined below:

> *"One way that we can work together with government as families is through the registered disability savings plan. It's a tax-deferred mechanism to encourage families to save for the future of their children with disabilities. The federal government is*

*presently considering this plan. I think that if governments can work with families, help us create this, and drop more of the barriers that families have to deal with, it would be so useful. We would all benefit. We estimate that families will contribute $230 million annually to a disability savings plan. The tax deferral would cost approximately $47 million. Families have a great deal to offer, and we have the potential to contribute a great deal more."* (Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network).

## Private Forest Land Management

Private forest land owners approached the Committee with a request for the provincial government to work with the federal government to remove the surplus test that must be applied to private-land logs proposed for export. The presentations identified that *Notice 102* prohibits a free and open market for wood harvested on private forests lands, thereby depriving private forest land owners of the revenues to support proper stand management. The witnesses made the following statements to the Committee:

*"What(would an) improved market access for private logs would mean for B.C.?: better utilization for private-land logs. How government can support the private land–tree farming sector is really simple. We just want an opportunity to compete. We don't want a handout. Just give us a chance to sell our logs into an open market."* (Private Forest Landowners Association).

*"It is in the best business interest to access the export market, but under Notice 102 this wood must first be offered to local B.C. mills. This means that not only does the log producer lose money, but also the B.C. government loses tax revenue, and jobs are lost in planting, crop maintenance and harvesting. To improve British Columbia's financial return from tree-growing — forestry — and to encourage more private land owners to grow trees, we need the freedom to access the best market."* (Maxine Haley, Nanaimo).

## Recommendations:

### The Committee recommends that the government:

- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis on a vaccination program to combat cervical cancer.
- Investigate the financial viability of implementing a registered disability savings plan.
- Lobby the federal government to review *Notice 102* limiting access to competitive log markets for logs originating from private forest lands.

# Conclusions

Over the course of 36 days in September and October 2006, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services conducted 15 public hearings in communities across this province and received more than 8,300 unique submissions on what choices and priorities British Columbians would like reflected in the next provincial budget. The record number of submissions made to the Finance Committee reflects both the keen interest British Columbians have in shaping the province's fiscal priorities and a tacit understanding that all submissions to the Finance Committee are given due consideration.

Copies of the *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper* were provided to all British Columbians — either through the province-wide flyer or an on-line form through the Finance Committee's website. The consultation paper provided citizens with a broad overview on the province's current allocation of budget resources; gave projections on available revenues, committed revenues, forecast allowances and existing infrastructure commitments; and outlined the government's three-year planned reduction in the debt-to-gross domestic product ratio.

This year, the budget consultation paper asked British Columbians to provide feedback on their choices and priorities for future provincial budgets. Specifically, the consultation paper asked for the public to indicate areas in which the government should spend more or spend less; rank eleven broad budget priorities ranging from providing better access to social housing, to debt and tax reductions, to faster access to health care; and indicate a preference on how the government should pay for necessary infrastructure projects. In addition, participants were invited to make other comments and suggestions concerning the upcoming provincial budget.

In summarizing the general priorities as outlined in the budget consultation paper, the Committee makes the following observations. As expected, the public offers considerable support for government to provide faster access to health services and educating our children and young adults. In addition, the Committee not only heard clear calls for the government to continue to reduce borrowing and debt, but also for the government to become more involved in protecting our environment.

Priorities that received moderate public support included strengthening the economy, improving assistance for people in need, building new infrastructure, providing better access to social housing, and protecting people and property. On-line and flyer responses indicated an apparent apprehension by respondents for the government to develop new or expanded programs and services.

With respect to how the government should proceed in balancing the need for new infrastructure and managing British Columbia's debt, a decisive majority of British Columbians supported the statement that *"It's important to invest in our infrastructure, but we need to limit our borrowing and keep debt affordable."*

In the Finance Committee's response to the general theme of choices and priorities presented in this consultation paper, the Committee has elected to structure its recommendations to the

Legislative Assembly by highlighting the three key themes that emerged through our public consultations. The themes emphasize that the government should:

- Continue to build upon British Columbia's economic success story,
- Enhance opportunities for those in need of assistance, and
- Support B.C.'s communities and natural environments.

With respect to building upon British Columbia's economic success story, the Committee highlights the broad support that we reviewed that called for the government to continue to pay down the provincial debt and reduce the ratio of debt-to-gross domestic product. The Finance Committee offers several recommendations pertaining to maintaining the province's overall competitive taxation regime. In addition, the Committee makes several recommendations on expanding British Columbia's workforce and enhancing both graduate student programs and skills and trades training in the province's colleges and universities.

Underpinning budgetary measures to promote and enhance British Columbia's economic development, the Committee also makes recommendations to government to provide additional assistance and support for those citizens in need of assistance. This broad theme includes recommendations on housing and education options for low-income individuals and families; strong recommendations for the government to allocate immediate resources to eliminate assessment waitlists for children and youth with special needs and funding for Community Living BC; as well as proposals for government action on issues relating to child care, hospice care, ambulance services, seniors housing and services for women in need of assistance.

In addition, the Committee makes several recommendations reflecting the public's demands for supporting B.C.'s communities and enhancing our natural environment. The Committee's recommendations focus on continued transportation, water, and education infrastructure investments, support for B.C.'s agricultural and arts communities, as well as suggestions on how the government may address the public's demand for stronger environmental protection.

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services offers these 36 recommendations in response to the Minister of Finance's *Budget 2007 Consultation Paper*. The diversity of recommendations is an unambiguous reflection on the impact the provincial budget has on the day-to-day life of British Columbians: their children, parents, and grandparents; business both small and large; and labour and volunteer organizations — all of whom contribute daily to making British Columbia a better place to work, do business and raise a family.

# Recommendations

## Build upon British Columbia's Economic Success Story

### *Debt and debt-to-GDP ratio*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Continue to allocate surplus forecast allowances and a portion of uncommitted revenues towards repayment of the provincial debt. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the government continue with its plans to reduce the provincial debt-to-GDP ratio as specified in the budget consultation paper.

### *Taxation*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Vigilantly monitor personal, corporate and consumption taxes to ensure British Columbia remains a competitive and desirable place to live and invest, including
    - o taxes paid by corporations,
    - o the capital tax on financial services,
    - o the Social Service Tax (PST), and
    - o personal income tax rates,

  and again examine the viability of harmonization of the social services tax and the federal goods and services tax, with a view ensuring that there be no net negative impact on consumers.
- Significantly increase the first-time home-buyer property transfer tax exemption price and consider eliminating the one percent property transfer tax on the first $200,000 of the purchase price, with the view of making home ownership more affordable.
- Give consideration to applying the proceeds of the social services tax on legal fees to funding legal aid services.

### *Growing British Columbia's Competitive Workforce*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Continue to work with the Government of Canada on the Provincial Nominee Program to expand the number and definition of qualified immigrants eligible for the program.
- Work with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia to increase the number of residency positions for internationally-trained doctors and continue to work to accelerate the assessment of physicians' credentials.
- Work with business, industry, and labour partners in expediting the full implementation of the training tax credit to ensure it meets the objectives of providing assistance to employers, as well as the completion of apprenticeships.
- Consider increasing the resources to expand both the programs and program supports available for students to achieve higher level of proficiency in English-as-a-second-language in order to be competitive in the workforce.

- Consider providing additional funding for graduate students, graduate student spaces, as well as the establishment of a competitive scholarship and a financial aid program available for graduate students.
- Examine the funding formula to post-secondary institutions for trades and technology programs, with the intent to optimizing the availability of these programs. In addition, the government should continue to provide resources to permit the expansion of apprenticeship training programs within the education system, with a particular emphasis on providing additional opportunities for aboriginals.
- Increase funding to allow for the elimination of fees charged for Adult Basic Education.

### *Private Forest Land Management*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Lobby the federal government to review *Notice 102* limiting access to competitive log markets for logs originating from private forest lands.

## Enhance Opportunities For Those in Need of Assistance

### *Housing Options*

**The Committee recommends that:**

- In light of recent government commitments to provide increased support for affordable housing options provided under both the Rental Assistance and Shelter Allowance Programs, the government continue to address British Columbians' needs for a diverse selection and an increase in the number of affordable rental housing accommodations. Furthermore, the government should expedite the review and development of its comprehensive housing strategy that may include, but is not limited to:
    - Capital grants for new affordable housing and co-op housing,
    - Rehabilitation of abandoned and substandard buildings,
    - Support services for those in need, and
    - Assistance for community-based housing providers.

### *Education Opportunities*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Immediately allocate necessary resources to eliminate the waitlists for assessments of children and youth with special needs. Furthermore, the government should provide funding for a comprehensive pre-screening program for all children.
- Consider reviewing B.C.'s income assistance policy to enable income assistance recipients to access further education opportunities.
- Ensure that tuition fees at B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions remain competitive vis-à-vis other Canadian jurisdictions.

*Child Care*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Develop a province-wide strategy on affordable, accessible, and quality child care options for British Columbians, and consider providing additional funds for child care.

*Mental Health, Community Living BC, Senior's Care, and General Health Care*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Increase funding to hospice care in an effort to provide quality end-of-life care that will ease the pressure on hospitals.
- Offer a full range of home care and home support services for seniors to ensure that a continuum of services is in place to meet the needs of a growing population of seniors.
- Consider increasing funding to the B.C. Ambulance Service, especially in interior and northern B.C., to ensure ambulances are able to adequately respond to emergency calls.
- Consider additional funding to Community Living BC for the developmentally disabled and their families, including support for youth as they transition into adulthood, and residential supports and services.
- Provide funding for a comprehensive mental health and addictions plan.
- Investigate the financial viability of implementing a registered disability savings plan.
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis on a vaccination program to combat cervical cancer.

*Women's Services*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Consider providing a full range services for women through an integrated service delivery model that may include, but is not limited to, sexual assault crisis counselling, women's shelters, and public outreach programs that assist in providing women information on the variety of services available for women in need.

## Support B.C.'s Communities and Natural Environment

*Transportation Infrastructure*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Continue to make infrastructure investments, while maintaining an affordable debt-to-GDP ratio.
- Proceed with the construction of infrastructure projects related to the Gateway Program.
- Consider allocating more resources to rehabilitation of transportation infrastructure in rural areas, including the maintenance of road beds impacted by industrial and logging activity.
- Consider increasing investment in both public transit infrastructure and funding for BC Transit. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the government continue to work closely with the federal, regional, and local governments to enable long-term transportation and transit planning supported by reliable sources of funding.

*Capital Projects*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Review investments in water infrastructure and water demand management programs, particularly to address potential shortages in both municipal and agricultural uses.
- Re-assess all post-secondary capital project plans and consider applying federal monies to offset the rising costs of post-secondary capital projects.

*Sector Support*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Work with the Government of Canada to ensure appropriate assistance to those regions and sectors of the province facing crisis situations, including drought in the Peace River region, Mountain Pine Beetle affected areas, and the fruit tree industry in the Okanagan.
- Examine the feasibility of providing marketing assistance to British Columbia's agricultural producers in light of the government's healthy living strategy.
- Increase funding to the B.C. Arts Council to enhance arts and culture in the province.

*Environmental Protection*

**The Committee recommends that the government:**

- Ensure sufficient staffing and resources are provided to the various ministries and agencies responsible for the ongoing monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations.
- Review — in consultation with both industry and the public — existing programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, monitor and publicly report on emissions impacts, and continue to support programs encouraging the development and use of clean energies and fuels.

# Appendix A: Online and Written Submissions Summary

| Electoral Districts | Online | Flyers | *Written* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **North Fraser Valley** | | | |
| 1. Abbotsford-Clayburn | 179 | 59 | *13* |
| 2. Abbotsford-Mount Lehman | | | |
| 11. Chilliwack-Kent | | | |
| 12. Chilliwack-Sumas | | | |
| **South Fraser Valley** | | | |
| 21. Fort Langley-Aldergrove | 200 | 45 | *10* |
| 26. Langley | | | |
| 28. Maple Ridge-Mission | | | |
| 29. Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows | | | |
| **Mid-Island** | | | |
| 3. Alberni-Qualicum | 330 | 124 | *32* |
| 30. Nanaimo | | | |
| 31. Nanaimo-Parksville | | | |
| 14. Comox Valley | | | |
| **North Island / Coast** | | | |
| 16. Cowichan-Ladysmith | 211 | 85 | *19* |
| 35. North Island | | | |
| 46. Powell River-Sunshine Coast | | | |
| **North** | | | |
| 4. Bulkley Valley-Stikine | 110 | 45 | *16* |
| 34. North Coast | | | |
| 41. Peace River North | | | |
| 42. Peace River South | | | |
| 56. Skeena | | | |
| **Prince George / Cariboo** | | | |
| 9. Cariboo North | 193 | 196 | *55* |
| 10. Cariboo South | | | |
| 47. Prince George-Mount Robson | | | |
| 48. Prince George North | | | |
| 49. Prince George-Omineca | | | |
| **Kamloops / Thompson** | | | |
| 22. Kamloops | 196 | 64 | *21* |
| 23. Kamloops-North Thompson | | | |
| 55. Shuswap | | | |
| 79. Yale-Lillooet | | | |
| **Okanagan** | | | |
| 24. Kelowna-Lake Country | 411 | 196 | *24* |
| 25. Kelowna-Mission | | | |
| 39. Okanagan-Vernon | | | |
| 40. Okanagan-Westside | | | |
| 43. Penticton-Okanagan Valley | | | |
| **South-east** | | | |
| 13. Columbia River-Revelstoke | 178 | 82 | *17* |
| 19. East Kootenay | | | |
| 32. Nelson-Creston | | | |
| 76. West Kootenay-Boundary | | | |
| **Outside BC/Unknown** | | | |
| On-line Submissions | 36 | | |
| Written Submissions | 3 | | |

| Electoral Districts | Online | Flyers | *Written* |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Burnaby / New Westminster** | | | |
| 5. Burnaby-Edmonds | 260 | 49 | *33* |
| 6. Burnaby-North | | | |
| 7. Burnaby-Willingdon | | | |
| 33. New Westminster | | | |
| **Tri-Cities** | | | |
| 8. Burquitlam | 247 | 36 | *11* |
| 15. Coquitlam-Maillardville | | | |
| 44. Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain | | | |
| 45. Port Moody-Westwood | | | |
| **South Fraser** | | | |
| 17. Delta North | 242 | 60 | *11* |
| 18. Delta South | | | |
| 50. Richmond Centre | | | |
| 51. Richmond East | | | |
| 52. Richmond-Steveston | | | |
| **Surrey** | | | |
| 57. Surrey-Cloverdale | 297 | 74 | *23* |
| 58. Surrey-Green Timbers | | | |
| 59. Surrey-Newton | | | |
| 60. Surrey-Panorama Ridge | | | |
| 61. Surrey-Tynehead | | | |
| 62. Surrey-Whalley | | | |
| 63. Surrey-White Rock | | | |
| **Vancouver East** | | | |
| 66. Vancouver-Fraserview | 208 | 33 | *10* |
| 67. Vancouver-Hastings | | | |
| 68. Vancouver-Kensington | | | |
| 69. Vancouver-Kingsway | | | |
| 71. Vancouver-Mount Pleasant | | | |
| **Vancouver West** | | | |
| 64. Vancouver-Burrard | 489 | 81 | *39* |
| 65. Vancouver-Fairview | | | |
| 70. Vancouver-Langara | | | |
| 72. Vancouver-Point Grey | | | |
| 73. Vancouver-Quilchena | | | |
| **North Shore** | | | |
| 36. North Vancouver-Lonsdale | 273 | 84 | *23* |
| 37. North Vancouver-Seymour | | | |
| 77. West Vancouver-Capilano | | | |
| 78. West Vancouver-Garibaldi | | | |
| **Greater Victoria** | | | |
| 20. Esquimalt-Metchosin | 603 | 197 | *41* |
| 27. Malahat-Juan de Fuca | | | |
| 38. Oak Bay-Gordon Head | | | |
| 53. Saanich North and the Islands | | | |
| 54. Saanich South | | | |
| 74. Victoria-Beacon Hill | | | |
| 75. Victoria-Hillside | | | |

# Appendix B: Organizations Taking Part in the 2006 Budget Consultation Process

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

City of Abbotsford
City of Dawson Creek
City of Fort St. John
City of Kelowna
City of Prince George
City of Quesnel
City of Terrace
District of Chetwynd
District of Taylor
Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority
Kitchener Improvement District
Peace River Regional District
Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine
Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District. Electoral Area A

**BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

*Provincial/National Organizations and Local Affiliates*

British Columbia Chamber of Commerce
- Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce
- Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
- Kamloops Chamber of Commerce
- Kelowna Chamber of Commerce
- Prince George Chamber of Commerce
- Richmond Chamber of Commerce
- Terrace & District Chamber of Commerce
- Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce
- Williams Lake and District Chamber of Commerce

British Columbia Real Estate Association
- Fraser Valley Real Estate Board
- Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver
- Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board
- Victoria Real Estate Board

Business Council of British Columbia
Canadian Bankers Association
Canadian Bar Association – British Columbia Branch
- Poverty Law Section

Canadian Federation of Independent Business
Community Business and Professionals Association of Canada
Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia
- Grant Thornton LLP
- Tenisci Piva Chartered Accountants
- Tyce Carle-Thiesson Chartered Accountants
- Vohora & Company Chartered Accountants

Insurance Bureau of Canada
Lawyers of South Cariboo
Motion Picture Production Industry Association of British Columbia
RESP Dealers Association of Canada
Retail BC
Retail Council of Canada
Surrey Board of Trade
Vancouver Board of Trade

**INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSES**

Argus Technologies Ltd.
Astra International Moving & Shipping Inc.
Becon Support Services Ltd.
Brighter Mechanical Limited
Canadian Direct Insurance
Creekhouse Gallery
DesignLink Strategic Resources
DGV Engineering Services Ltd.
Enertec Developments Ltd.
Friedrich & Friedrich Co.
Kindale Developmental Association
Law Office of Kirk I Tousaw
Liquid Capital Pacific Corp.
Merck Frosst Canada
Milk Ranch Ltd.
MITACS Inc.
Northwest Housing Consulting Inc.
PictureChasers Photography
Prima Enterprises Ltd.
Sanctuary Family Care Services Inc.
Satellite Video Exchange Society

**ECONOMIC SECTORS**

*Agriculture, Food and Fisheries*

BC Agriculture Council
BC Food Processors Association
British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association
British Columbia Restaurant and Foodservices Association
North Coast Steelhead Alliance

*Construction Industry*

British Columbia Construction Association
Canadian Home Builders' Association of Victoria
Northern British Columbia Construction Association

*Energy and Mining Sectors*

Association for Mineral Exploration of British Columbia
East Kootenay Chamber of Mines
Geoscience BC
Mining Association of British Columbia
Northwest Powerline Coalition
Terrane Metals Corp.
Western Keltic Mines Inc.

*Forestry Sector*

Island Timberlands LP
Private Forest Landowners Association
SJA Forestry Consultant
Tolko Industries Ltd.
Truck Loggers Association

*Transportation Sector*

B.C. Marine Dealers Working Group
New Car Dealers Association of B.C.
Prince George Airport Authority

*Other*

Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies
Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores
Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Okanagan
Consulting Engineers of British Columbia
Genome British Columbia
Initiatives Prince George
International Finance Centre British Columbia
Kootenay Boundary Regional Resources Co-operative
Shate Cariboo/Chilcotin Resources

**LABOUR UNIONS**

Academic Workers' Union (Northwest Community College)
B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union
British Columbia Teachers' Federation
British Columbia Federation of Labour
Canadian Union of Public Employees BC Division
Cariboo-Chilcotin Teachers' Association
United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union - CAW

**EDUCATION SECTOR (K-to-12)**

School District No. 60 (Peace River North/ Fort St. John)
School District No. 63 (Saanich)
School District No. 73 (Kamloops/Thompson)
School District No. 82 (Coast Mountains)
The Kenneth Gordon Foundation

**EDUCATION SECTOR (POST-SECONDARY)**

Aging and Health Research Centre, Thompson Rivers University
Alma Mater Society of UBC
British Columbia College Presidents
Camosun College Faculty Association
Canadian Federation of Students, B.C. Office
Capilano College Faculty Association
Coalition of B.C. Graduate Students
College of New Caledonia
College of New Caledonia Students' Association
College of the Rockies Faculty Association
Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia
Douglas College Faculty Association
Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design Faculty Association
Faculty Association of the College of New Caledonia
Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of B.C.
Kwantlen Faculty Association
Malaspina Faculty Association
Malaspina Students' Union
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology Employees Association
North Island College Faculty Association
North Island Students' Union
Northwest Community College
Okanagan College Students' Union
Selkirk College Faculty Association
Selkirk Students' Association
Simon Fraser Student Society
Simon Fraser University
Simon Fraser University Faculty Association
Students' Union of Vancouver Community College
Thompson Rivers University, Aging and Health Research Centre
Thompson Rivers University, School of Social Work and Human Service
Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association
Thompson Rivers University Students' Union
Tooba Physical Theatre Centre
University College of the Fraser Valley
University College of the Fraser Valley Faculty and Staff Association
University of British Columbia Faculty Association
Okanagan Faculty Committee
University of British Columbia Students' Union – Okanagan
University of Victoria Faculty Association
University of Victoria Students' Society
University President's Council of B.C.
Vancouver Community College Faculty Association

**HEALTH SECTOR**

AIDS Society of Kamloops
AIDS Vancouver Society
British Columbia College of Chiropractors
British Columbia Chiropractic Association
British Columbia Medical Association
BC Schizophrenia Society, Tsilhqot'in Justice Program
Canadian Cancer Society, BC & Yukon Division
Canadian Mental Health Association, British Columbia Division
Center for Epilepsy and Seizure Education
Centre for Drug Research and Development
Chelation & Alternative Health Association of Canada Inc.
Interior Health Regional Consumer Council
Langley Memorial Hospital Family Council
Massage Therapists' Association of BC
Northern Health Authority
Northern Family Health Society
Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health
Society of Living Intravenous Drug Users
South Island Health Coalition

*Hospice & Palliative Care*

Central Cariboo Hospice Palliative Care Society
Delta Hospice Society
Kitimat Hospice Association
Prince George Hospice Society
Quesnel and District Palliative Care Association
Rotary Hospice House
Shuswap Hospice Society
Sunshine Coast Hospice Society

**NON-PROFIT AND ADVOCACY SECTORS**

*Advocacy Groups*

Abbotsford Restorative Justice and Advocacy Association
BC Old Age Pensioners Organization
- Branch No.93
- Branch No.191

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – BC Office
Canadian Taxpayers Federation
Council of Canadians
- Comox Valley Chapter
- Kamloops Chapter

Greater Victoria Citizen Advisory Society

Legal Services Society
Prevention Public Policy Group
Prince George Council of Seniors
Save Our Northern Seniors
The Fulcrum Project

*Arts Community*
Abbotsford Symphony Orchestra Society
ArtsConnect Tri-Cities Arts Council
Assembly of British Columbia Arts Councils
British Columbia Arts Council
British Columbia Choral Federation
Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists - BC Chapter
Chetwynd Community Arts Council
Citizens Roundtable for the Arts
Dancer Transition Resource Centre
Fort St. John Community Arts Council
Greater Vancouver Alliance for Arts and Culture
Independent Media Artist Alliance
Nanaimo Arts Groups
New Forms Media Society
Prince Rupert Community Arts Council
ProArt Alliance of Greater Victoria
Public Dreams Society
Sicamous Visual and Performing Arts Society
Vancouver Access Artist Run Centre
Vancouver Symphony Society

*Child- and Family-Serving Agencies*
Cariboo Chilcotin Child Development Centre Association
B.C. Child Care Advocacy Forum
City of Vancouver Family Court/Youth Justice Committee
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC
Federation of Child & Family Services of B.C.
First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
Greater Victoria Child and Family Counselling Association
Human Early Learning Partnership
Kids First Parent Association of Canada
Kootenay Kids Society
Mychael Company
Primary Colours Child Development Centre
SFU Childcare Society
St. Leonards Youth and Family Services
Surrounded By Cedar Child and Family Services

*Community/Housing Organizations*
Abbotsford Community Services
Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC
British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association
Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society
Comox Valley Community Food Action Society
Cowichan Citizens Coalition
Dawson Creek Society for Community Living
Fraser Heights Community Association
Fraserside Community Services Society
Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness
Hollyburn Family Services
Mission Self Advocacy Group
More Than a Roof Mennonite Housing Society
Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness
Ross Road Community Group
Self Employment and Entrepreneur Development Society (SEEDS)
Skeena Diversity Society
Terrace Anti-Poverty Group Society
Willow WAI project

*Disability-related Groups*
Autism Society of British Columbia
B.C. Association for Community Living
B.C. Federation of Families Society
British Columbia Association of Child Development & Intervention
British Columbia Paraplegic Association
Delta Community Living Society
Developmental Disabilities Association
Down Syndrome Research Foundation
Eureka Clubhouse
Friends of Ellie Griffiths Society
Garth Homer Society
Gateway Society – Services for Persons with Autism
L'Arche Greater Vancouver
Parent Support Group for Families of Mentally Handicapped Adults Society
Parksville and District Association for Community Living
Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network
Powell River Model Community Project for Persons with Disabilities
Quesnel Community Living Association
Surrey Association for Community
Victoria Association for Community Living

*Environmental Groups*
Agricultural Land Reserve Protection and Enhancement Committee
B.C. ENGO Marine Planning Caucus
B.C. Wildlife Federation
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – B.C. Chapter
Conservation Voters of BC
Federation of BC Naturalists
Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia
Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society
Land Trust Alliance of British Columbia
People's Action Committee for Healthy Air
Western Canada Wilderness Committee
World Wildlife Canada

*Women and Men's Services*
Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society
Kamloops Sexual Assault Counseling Centre
Kamloops Women's Resource Group Society
Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre
Omineca Safe Home Society
Quesnel Women's Resource Centre
REAL Women of BC
Tri-City Women's Resource Society
Vancouver Women's Health Collective
Women of the North - United

*Other*
Diocese of Prince George
Ferry Advisory Committee
Green Party of BC
Penticton Soccer Club Society
Outdoor Ice Oval Society of Prince George

# Appendix C: Public Hearings Witness List

Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, David Hull, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Abbotsford Symphony Orchestra, Karen Young, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Academic Workers Union, Rocque Berthiaume, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
AIDS Society of Kamloops, Jo Rothenburger, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
ArtsConnect TriCities Arts Council, Sherry Carroll, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Assembly of British Columbia Arts Councils, Gina Sufrin, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Association for Mineral Exploration of British Columbia, Dan M. Jepsen, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Autism Society of British Columbia, Roxanne Black, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Autism Society of British Columbia, Jennifer Ralph, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
B.C. ENGO Marine Planning Caucus, Michele Patterson, Sabine Jessen, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
B.C. Federation of Labour, Angela Schira, Jim Sinclair, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
B.C. Wildlife Federation, Paul Adams, Lisa Helmer, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
BC Agriculture Council, Steve Thomson, Dick Klein Geltink, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
BC Association For Community Living, Laney Bryenton, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
BC Chamber of Commerce, Dan Albas, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
BC Child Care Advocacy Forum, Rita Chudnovsky, Sheila Davidson, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
BC Federation of Families Society, Karen Philipchuk, Dawn Steele, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
BC Food Processors Association, S. Anthony Toth, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
BC Marine Dealers Working Group, Karen Clark-Marlow, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
BC Schizophrenia Society, Cindy Parsons, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Becon Support Services Ltd., Angela Bell, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Bill Belsey, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Doug Belsher, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Rina Berkshire, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Jane Birkbeck, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
British Columbia Arts Council, Stephanie Fischer, Allison Girvan, Aspen Switzer, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
British Columbia Chamber of Commerce, John Winter, Jon Garson, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
British Columbia College of Chiropractors; British Columbia Chiropractic Association, Dr. Don Nixdorf, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
British Columbia Construction Association, Manley McLachlan, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association, Glen Lucas, Joe Sardinha, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
British Columbia Medical Association, Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
British Columbia Non Profit Housing Association, Alice Sundberg, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
British Columbia Old Age Pensioners Organization, Donovan Startin, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
British Columbia Paraplegic Association, Stephanie Cadieux, Melanie Crombie, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
British Columbia Real Estate Association, Janet Cunningham, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
British Columbia Teachers' Federation, Susan Lambert, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Tony Brumell, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Business Council of British Columbia, Jock Finlayson, Ken Peacock, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Camosun College Faculty Association, Susan Johnston, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Colin Campbell, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D), Bob Dawson, Hal Stvall, Bern Philip, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Canadian Bankers Association, David Poole, Raymond Currie, Paul Griffin, Graham MacLachlan, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Canadian Bar Association - British Columbia Branch, Frits Verhoeven, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Canadian Bar Association Poverty Law Section (B.C. Branch), Pat MacDonald, Jess Hadley, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, B.C. Office, Seth Klein, Marc Lee, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Canadian Direct Insurance, Colin Brown, Brian Young, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Laura Jones, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Canadian Federation of Students, BC Office, Shamus Reid, Summer McFayden, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Canadian Home Builders' Association of Victoria, Casey Edge, Steve Copp, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Canadian Mental Health Association, British Columbia Division, Beverley Gutray, Sepp Tschierschwitz, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Capilano College Faculty Association, John Wilson, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Cariboo-Chilcotin Teachers' Association, Sheila Wyse, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Centre for Epilepsy and Seizure Education, Laura Yake, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Citizens Roundtable for the Arts, Vimmy Dharmi, Sandra Garossino, Jaspreet Kalsi, Vanessa Richards, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
City Of Abbotsford, Councillor Bruce Beck, Mayor George Ferguson, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
City of Dawson Creek, Mayor Calvin Kruk, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
City of Fort St. John, Mayor Jim Eglinski, John Locher, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
City of Prince George, Councillor Don Zurowski, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)

City of Terrace, Councillor Rich McDaniel, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Betty Cleland, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, Sharon Gregson, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Walt Cobb, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
College of New Caledonia, John Bowman, Art Robin, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
College of New Caledonia Students' Association, Valentine Crawford, Rob Mealey, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
College of the Rockies Faculty Association, Kathy Bonnell, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Community Business and Professional Association of Canada, Barry Morley, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Comox Valley Affordable Housing Society; Comox Valley Community Food Action Society, Betty-Anne Juba, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce, Dianne Hawkins, Joe Smith, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia, Rob Clift, Chris Petter, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia, Chris Petter, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Conservation Voters of BC, Matthew Price, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Consulting Engineers of British Columbia, Neil Cumming, Glenn Martin, Francois Morton, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Council of Canadians, Comox Valley Chapter, Gwyn Frayne, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Council of Canadians, Kamloops Chapter, Anita Strong, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
DesignLink Strategic Resources, Maatje Piket, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Developmental Disabilities Association, Alanna Hendren, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Tony DiMaria, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
District of Chetwynd, Mayor Evan Saugstad, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
District Of Taylor, Councillor Brad Filmer, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Douglas College Faculty Association, Susan Briggs, Linda Forsythe, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Down Sydrome Research Foundation, Dawn McKenna, Naznin Virji-Babul, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
John Dressler, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Dr. Jannie du Plessis, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Jim Edgson, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design Faculty Association, Dr. Rory Wallace, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Eureka Clubhouse, Jessica Dawson, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Garth Evans, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Faculty Association of the College of New Caledonia, Jan Mastromatteo, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Bob Fedderly, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Federation of BC Naturalists, Jeremy McCall, Bev Ramey, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Federation of Child and Family Services of BC, Craig Meredith, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Federation of Post Secondary Educators of B.C., Phillip Legg, Cindy Oliver, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, Steve Kerstetter, Adrienne Montani, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Fort St. John Community Arts Council, Aleisha Hendry, Laurie Petrucci, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Fraser Heights Community Association, Ian MacPherson, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Fraser Valley Real Estate Board, Debbie Jay, Kelvin Neufeld, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Fraserside Community Services Society, Caroline Bonesky, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Larry Galbraith, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Genome British Columbia, Bruce Schmidt, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Geoscience BC, Lyn Anglin, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Laurie Geschke, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Grant Thornton LLP, Kyman Chan, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Monique Gray-Smith, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce, Bev Dornan, Lynn Whitehouse, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Greater Vancouver Alliance for Arts and Culture, Richard Prokopanko, Heather Redfern, Adrienne Wong, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Bruce Carter, Shannon Renault, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Sherrold Haddad, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Sheila Haegedorn, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
Maxine Haley, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
Ted Hawryluk, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
George Hayes, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Andrew Hopkins, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Human Early Learning Partnership, Lynell Anderson, Dr. Paul Kershaw, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Initiatives Prince George & Prince George Airport Authority, Stieg Hoeg, Gerry Offet, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia, Amed Naqvi, Richard Rees, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
Insurance Bureau of Canada, Serge Corbeil, Lindsay Olson, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Interior Health Regional Consumer Council, Charly Sinclair, Amanda Swoboda, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Penny Irons, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Island Timberlands LP, Darshan Sihota, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
Garry Kalinski, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society, Kathleen Kendall, Louise Richards, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Kamloops Chamber of Commerce, Jaimie Drew, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre, Cynthia Davis, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Kamloops Women's Resource Centre, Dawn Hatch, Trish Archibald, Heather Robinson, Jasmin Wright, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Paul Keeling, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce, Kevin Crookes, Weldon Le Blanc, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Tona Kivi, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Kootenay Kids Society, Deb Jarvis, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
Kwantlen Faculty Association, Terri Van Steinburg, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)

Charlene LaCombe, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Langley Memorial Hospital Family Council, Kathy Keenan, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Rick Lau, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Lawyers of South Cariboo, Constance Sauter, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Legal Services Society, Mark Benton, Bruce Hardy, Karen Hiebert, Glenn Stasiuk, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Natalie Lidster, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Wayne Lucier, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Malasapina Faculty Association, Dominique Roelants, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
Malaspina Students Union, Steve Beasley, Michael Olson, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
Massage Therapists Association of BC, Brenda Locke, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Lauren McCusker, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Merck Frosst Canada Ltd., Narguiz Ali-Zade, Pat Lauson, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Motion Picture Production Industry Association of British Columbia, Peter Leitch, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Mychael Company, Dr. Mychael Gleeson, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Nanaimo Arts Group, Lynne Fraser, Sandra Thomson, Debbie Trueman, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness, John Horn, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
New Car Dealers Association of B.C., Manse Brinkley, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Nicola Valley Institute Of Technology Faculty Association, Brent Langlois, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Yvonne Nielsen, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
North Island College Faculty Association, Bill McConnell, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
North Island Students' Union, James Bowen, Jeff Hoy, Lori MacDonald, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Northern B.C. Construction Association, Rosalind Thorn, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Northwest Community College; British Columbia College Presidents, Stephanie Forsyth, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Northwest Housing Consulting, Peggy Julseth, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Northwest Powerline Coalition; Western Keltic Mines Inc., Donald McInnes, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Okanagan College Students' Union, David Lubbers, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board, Geri Surinak, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Old Age Pensioners Organization, Branch # 93, Winnifred Gooding, Floris Martineau, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Dawna Ottenbreit, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Outdoor Ice Oval Society of Prince George, Bob Dewhirst, Anne Pousette, Dick Voneugen, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Peace River Regional District, Karen Goodings, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
People's Action Committee for Healthy Air, Betty Bekkering, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, Jack Styan, Susan Whittaker, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Prevention Public Policy Group, Harold C. Daykin, Brenda Martin, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Prince George Chamber of Commerce, Shaun Clarke, Sherry Sethen, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Prince George Hospice Society, Donalda Carson, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Prince Rupert Community Arts Council, Monica Lamb-Yorski, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Private Forest Landowners Association, Rod Bealing, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Joyce Procure, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)

ProArt Alliance of Greater Victoria, Ian Case, Jennifer Swan, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Wendy Prothero, 19-Sep-06 (Courtenay)
Surinderpal Rathor, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)

Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, Harriet Permut, Sylvia Sam, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Real Women of BC, Doris Darvasi, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Joan Reekie, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, Joanne Monaghan, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
RESP Dealers Association of Canada, Peter Lewis, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Retail BC, Mark Startup, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Richmond Chamber Of Commerce, Bruce Rozenhart, Barbara Tinson, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Save Our Northern Seniors Society, Jim Collins, Jean Leahy, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Hermann Schindler, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
School District No. 60 (Peace River North), Ernie Inglehart, Linda Sewell, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Self Employment and Entrepreneur Development Society (SEEDS), Monika Verma Laul, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Selkirk College Faculty Association, Tracy Punchard, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
Selkirk Students' Association, Dustin Grof, 25-Sep-06 (Nelson)
Svend Serup, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Interpretative Services, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Simon Fraser Student Society, Margo Dunnet, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Simon Fraser University, Wilf Hurd, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Simon Fraser University Faculty Association, Glenn Chapman, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
SJA Forestry Consultant, Stirling Angus, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
Skeena Diversity Society; Women of the North United, Frances Birdsell, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Skeena Queen Charlotte Regional District (Electoral Area 'A'), Des Nobels, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Society of Living Intravenous Drug Users, Denis Gudmundson, Carol Romanow, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
South Island Health Coalition, Phil Lyons, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
St. Leonards Youth And Family Services, Dave Stevenson, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Jodi Staples, 04-Oct-06 (Fort St. John)
Myrna Stevens, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Students Union at Vancouver Community College, Christina Clews, Christa Peters, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Surrey Board of Trade, Peter Holt, Ray Hudson, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Tenisci Piva Chartered Accountants, Ron Tenisci, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Terrace & District Chamber Of Commerce, David Pernarowski, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Terrane Metals Corp.; Mining Association of British Columbia; Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia, Byng Giraud, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association, Dr. Thomas Friedman, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Thompson Rivers University School of Social Work and Human Service, Michael Crawford, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Thompson Rivers University Students' Union, Nathan Lane, Terry Monteleone, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Thompson Rivers University, Aging and Health Research Centre, Dr. Wendy Hulko, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Tolko Industries Ltd., Rob Fraser, Tom Hoffman, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, Brian McCristall, 17-Oct-06 (Port Coquitlam)
Truck Loggers Association, Stirling Angus, Sandy McKellar, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Andy Tse, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Tsilhqot'in Justice Program, Brenda Humphre, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Tyce Carle-Thiesson Chartered Accountants, Tyce Doug, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
United Fisherman and Allied Workers' Union - CAW, Conrad Lewis, Katherine Stewart, Joy Thorkelson, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
University College of the Fraser Valley, Dr. H. A. Bassford, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
University College of the Fraser Valley Faculty and Staff Association, Scott Fast, 06-Oct-06 (Abbotsford)
University of British Columbia Faculty Association, Jim Johnson, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
University of British Columbia Students' Union - Okanagan, Robert Chavarie, David Westmacott, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
University of Victoria Faculty Association, William Pfaffenberger, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
University of Victoria Students' Society, Penny Beames, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
University Presidents Council of British Columbia, Don Avison, Lauren Hunter Eberle, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Vancouver Board of Trade, Dave Park, Al Sello, 27-Sep-06 (Surrey)
Vancouver Community College Faculty Association, Frank Cosco, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Vancouver Women's Health Collective, Caryn Duncan, 20-Sep-06 (Vancouver)
Victoria Real Estate Board, Scott Kendrew, 16-Oct-06 (Victoria)
Vohora & Company, Praveen Vohora, 05-Oct-06 (Prince Rupert)
Margie Waldie, 05-Oct-06 (Terrace)
Dr. Robert Whiteley, 25-Sep-06 (Kelowna)
Williams Lake and District Chamber of Commerce, Roger Solly, 26-Sep-06 (Williams Lake)
Steven Willment, 04-Oct-06 (Prince George)
Willow WAI Project, Gordon Cote, Mike Hunter, Jane Templeman, 19-Sep-06 (Nanaimo)
Garry Worth, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)
Charlene Yow, 26-Sep-06 (Kamloops)

# Appendix D: Written Submissions

Abbotsford Restorative Justice & Advocacy Association, Colette Squires, FGS-2006-290
Oclides Achermann, FGS-2006-21
Lyle Adams, FGS-2006-327
Affiliation of Multicultural Societies & Services Agencies of BC, Lynn Moran, FGS-2006-232
Bassam Al-Kuwatli, FGS-2006-131
ALR Protection And Enhancement Committee, John Russell, FGS-2006-293
Helen Ansell, FGS-2006-198
Argus Technologies Ltd., Sam Chinapoo, FGS-2006-250
Douglas A. Armstrong, FGS-2006-69
Marilyn Armstrong, FGS-2006-210
Dwayne Attfield, FGS-2006-62
B.C. Government and Service Employees Union, George Heyman, FGS-2006-281
Eduardo Baena, FGS-2006-405
Peter Bailey, FGS-2006-31
Jean Bain, FGS-2006-261
Iris Baker, FGS-2006-144
Norma Barnes, FGS-2006-197
Dr. Thomas W. Barnett, FGS-2006-175
Thomas W. Barnett, FGS-2006-102
Mavis and Vic Bartell, FGS-2006-49
BC Association For Community Living, Government Relations and Social Policy, Cindy Chapman, FGS-2006-94
Brian & Rita Beach, FGS-2006-235
Joanne Bealy, FGS-2006-302
Normand Bedard, FGS-2006-381
Karen J. Beeson, FGS-2006-163
Clare Marie Belanger, FGS-2006-4
Dr. Maureen Bendick, FGS-2006-318
Gwen Bennett, FGS-2006-189
Carl & Lorri Benson, FGS-2006-256
Agnes Bergen, FGS-2006-397
Steve Beynon, FGS-2006-50
Merlyn Bigham, FGS-2006-219
Svein Bjordal, FGS-2006-159
Pierre Blancard, FGS-2006-41
Myrna Blossom, FGS-2006-32
Lauren Bomhof, FGS-2006-19
Suan H. Booiman, FGS-2006-98
Barry Booth, FGS-2006-359
Deb Borsos, FGS-2006-14
Alan Bourne, FGS-2006-342
Sylvia A. Bowen, FGS-2006-259
Janet Boyle, FGS-2006-116
British Columbia Association of Child Development and Intervention, Bruce Sandy, FGS-2006-200
British Columbia Choral Federation, Willi Zwozdesky, FGS-2006-326
British Columbia Restaurant & Food Services Association, Richard Floody, FGS-2006-266
Linda and Olmer Brown, FGS-2006-223
Rose Bruch Carreras, FGS-2006-204
Thomas R. Buchenauer, FGS-2006-390
Ellen Burns, FGS-2006-358
G. D. Calder, FGS-2006-158
Bernice Callaghan, FGS-2006-172
Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores, Nadine Saby, FGS-2006-292
Canadian Cancer Society, BC and Yukon Division, Barbara Kaminsky, FGS-2006-364
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - BC Chapter/ World Wildlife Canada, Chloe O'Loughlin, FGS-2006-294
Canadian Taxpayers Federation, Sara MacIntyre, FGS-2006-230
Canadian Union of Public Employees - BC Division, Barry O'Neill, FGS-2006-229
Cariboo Chilcotin Child Development Centre Association, J. Tickner, FGS-2006-6
Sheila Carrick, FGS-2006-257
Alan Cassels, FGS-2006-182
Patricia Cattermole, FGS-2006-37
Central Cariboo Hospice Palliative Care Society, Elaine Benoit, FGS-2006-309
Centre For Drug Research And Development, natalie E. Dakers, FGS-2006-202
Chelation & Alternative Health Association Of Canada Inc., James Chambers, FGS-2006-224
Chetwynd Community Arts Council, Yvonne L. Elden, FGS-2006-253
Wendy Child, FGS-2006-278
Denise Chow, FGS-2006-402
Dave Chutter, FGS-2006-164
City Of Kelowna, Office of the Mayor, Sharon Shepherd, FGS-2006-70
City Of Quesnel, Mayor Nate Bello, FGS-2006-56
City of Vancouver Family Court/Youth Justice Committee, Roberta Bradbury, Eileen LeGallais, Frank Tester, FGS-2006-206
A. Clark, FGS-2006-16
David Claxton, FGS-2006-169
Sandra Clermont, FGS-2006-97
Virginia Clover, FGS-2006-64
Chelan Cnossen, FGS-2006-340
Jane Coady, FGS-2006-86
Coalition of B.C. Graduate Students, Lauren Hunter Eberle, FGS-2006-331
Tracy Cogan, FGS-2006-388
Rena Cohen, FGS-2006-213
Community Futures Development Corp. Of Central Okanagan, Eric Greer, FGS-2006-12
Cowichan Citizens Coalition, Bill & Celia Abram, FGS-2006-365
Robert Cowie, FGS-2006-51
James A. Craig, FGS-2006-112
Creekhouse Gallery, David R. McLann, FGS-2006-337
Gloria Dafoe, FGS-2006-119
Dancer Transition Resource Centre, Andrea Gunnlaugson, FGS-2006-221
Arlene Darley, FGS-2006-15
Rhona Davies, FGS-2006-40
Peter Dawson, FGS-2006-109

Ivy De Cooman, FGS-2006-195
Delta Community Living Society, Anita Sihota, FGS-2006-285
Delta Hospice Society, Nancy Macey, FGS-2006-300
Marco den Ouden, FGS-2006-35
Sheila den Toom, FGS-2006-301
Joyce Denluck, FGS-2006-369
DGV Engineering Services Ltd., David Vincent, FGS-2006-58
David Diamond, FGS-2006-190
John Alex Dick, FGS-2006-379
Diocese of Prince George, Nina Pickering, FGS-2006-277
Lorna Dittmar, FGS-2006-126
Stella Dodge, FGS-2006-165
David N. Doerfler, FGS-2006-137
Dick Doerkson, FGS-2006-177
Jamie Drost, FGS-2006-373
Coleen Duggan, FGS-2006-63
Barbara Duncan, FGS-2006-115
Glen R. E. Dunn, FGS-2006-237
East Kootenay Chamber Of Mines, Ross Stanfield, FGS-2006-247
Paul G. Eberlein, FGS-2006-315
Betty Eckgren, FGS-2006-46
Kim Egger, FGS-2006-145
Diane Eide, FGS-2006-404
Odd Eidsvik, FGS-2006-129
Christopher Elliott, FGS-2006-9
William M. and Susanne Ellwyn, FGS-2006-211
Tim Eymundson, FGS-2006-34
Bonnie Fallowfield, FGS-2006-38
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Artemis Fire, FGS-2006-152
Carl Foley, FGS-2006-104
Judy Fowlie, FGS-2006-267
Friends Of Cypress Provincial Park Society, Alex Wallace, FGS-2006-241
Friends of Ellie Griffiths Society, Sue Salter, FGS-2006-66
Fulcrum Project (The), Alan C. James, FGS-2006-268
Doris Gallas, FGS-2006-99
Gateway Society: Services for Persons with Autism, Babara Baydala, David Cender, Judy Forster, Steve Lane, Sonia Osborne, Karen Philipchuk, FGS-2006-18
Carolann Glover McGillivray, FGS-2006-209
Nigel Godfrey, FGS-2006-111
Leona Gom, FGS-2006-135
Tom Good, FGS-2006-8
Sandra Goodkey, FGS-2006-338
Ann Gordon, FGS-2006-287
Dorothy Gough, FGS-2006-214
Trisha Gray, FGS-2006-67
Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee On Homelessness, Cheryl Prepchuk, FGS-2006-231
Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (Translink), Susan Danard, FGS-2006-361
Greater Victoria Child and Family Counselling Association, Rachel Spence, FGS-2006-308
Green Party Of Bc, Adriane Carr, FGS-2006-307
Sarah Groves, FGS-2006-184
Marvin Haave, FGS-2006-180
Jean Hadgraft, FGS-2006-262
Jill Halliwell, FGS-2006-59
Tim Hanna, FGS-2006-179
Marilyn Harder, FGS-2006-157
Bryan Harman, FGS-2006-407
Denise Haskett, FGS-2006-347
James David Head, FGS-2006-392
Judith G. Heddle, FGS-2006-357
Bill and May Henderson, FGS-2006-142
Doreen Louise Henderson, FGS-2006-389
David Hodgson, FGS-2006-151
Brian Hollingshead, FGS-2006-167
Hollyburn Family Services, Alan Kwinter, FGS-2006-248
Alice Holm, FGS-2006-148
Denise Holmen, FGS-2006-10
Eric Holopainen, FGS-2006-273
John Honsinger, FGS-2006-150
Ian Hourston, FGS-2006-140
Irene Howell, FGS-2006-168
Karen Huebert, FGS-2006-395
Rosalin Innes, FGS-2006-399
Institute of Chartered Accountants of British Columbia, Richard Rees, FGS-2006-291
International Financial Centre, Helen Cheung, FGS-2006-95
Miguelina Lopez Inzunza, FGS-2006-346
Sherrill Jackson, FGS-2006-333
Rudy Jagusch, FGS-2006-73
Doris Jensen, FGS-2006-149
Allan Johnson, FGS-2006-234
Dawn Johnson, FGS-2006-274
Robert H. Juulsen, FGS-2006-391
Elizabeth Kaller, FGS-2006-339
Maggy Kaplan, FGS-2006-141
Sharon Kates, FGS-2006-245
Stacey Kennedy, FGS-2006-325
Kenneth Gordon Foundation (The), Chris W. Sanderson, FGS-2006-228
K. M. Kent, FGS-2006-270
Sandra Kerr, FGS-2006-53
Kids First Parent Association Of Canada, Helen Ward, FGS-2006-295
Bryan Kineshanko, FGS-2006-117
Sera Kirk, FGS-2006-124
Deanna Kirschke, FGS-2006-82
Tammi-Lynne Kitching, FGS-2006-380
Elizabeth G. Klassen, FGS-2006-96
Lorna Klein, FGS-2006-130
Norman Klenman, FGS-2006-44
Fred & Patricia Klotz, FGS-2006-107
Lori Knoll, FGS-2006-304
Kootenay Boundary Regional Resources Co-Operative, Andrew Jarrett, FGS-2006-222
E.J. Krass, FGS-2006-20
Lenora Kristensen, FGS-2006-311
Heine Lageweg, FGS-2006-188
Barbara Laird, FGS-2006-110
Land Trust Alliance Of British Columbia (The), Sheila Harrington, Eileen Palmer, FGS-2006-280
Monika Lange, FGS-2006-45
Fred Langford, FGS-2006-178

L'Arche Greater Vancouver, Magda VanZyl, FGS-2006-348
Kim Lear, FGS-2006-271
Douglas Leatherdale, FGS-2006-162
Pius Lee, FGS-2006-101
Ursula Lee, FGS-2006-36
Wilma Legaspi, FGS-2006-386
Bryce Leigh, FGS-2006-314
Kathryn Lestage, FGS-2006-335
Marilyn Lichacz, FGS-2006-312
Bengt Lindstrom, FGS-2006-78
Colleen Linttell, FGS-2006-153
Liquid Capital Pacific Corp., Dan and Karen Effa, FGS-2006-60
Alphonse Litjens, FGS-2006-170
John Living, FGS-2006-146
E. R. Lochhead, FGS-2006-132
Esther Lowe, FGS-2006-393
Candice M. Lucey, FGS-2006-321
Ed Lucier, FGS-2006-171
L. MacDonald, FGS-2006-350
Ronald J. Macdonald, FGS-2006-123
R. S. MacDougall, FGS-2006-147
Christina Mader, FGS-2006-72
Gerhard Magner, FGS-2006-43
Brian Mah, FGS-2006-341
Hannah Main-van der Kamp, FGS-2006-79
Carl Maissan, FGS-2006-91
Ronald Malange, FGS-2006-191
Grace Malm, FGS-2006-226
Ron Manning, FGS-2006-366
Audrey Martin, FGS-2006-306
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Wayne and Kathy Mason, FGS-2006-187
John Mayba, FGS-2006-225
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Virginia Mazzone, FGS-2006-155
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Gloria McDonald, FGS-2006-29
Barbara McDonell, FGS-2006-113
Debra Ann McDougall, FGS-2006-349
Randy McEwen, FGS-2006-406
Don McIntyre, FGS-2006-1
Debby McKenzie, FGS-2006-39
Grace McKinnon, FGS-2006-284
Alex G. R. McLean, FGS-2006-61
C. G. McLeod, FGS-2006-166
Hans Meyer, FGS-2006-322
Linda Meyer, FGS-2006-176
Martin Meyer, FGS-2006-36
Milk Ranch Ltd., Ken Flett, FGS-2006-106
Eleanor Miller, FGS-2006-156
Doug Moore, FGS-2006-383
Cathy Morton, FGS-2006-103
Amie Mummery, FGS-2006-323
Susie Myers, FGS-2006-282
Nanaimo Mens Resource Centre, Theo J. Boere, FGS-2006-330
Eileen Nattrass, FGS-2006-105
Terry Nelson, FGS-2006-23
Gail J. Neufeld, FGS-2006-205
John J. and Marguerita Neufeld, FGS-2006-143
William J. Neufeld, FGS-2006-84
Bruce Neuls, FGS-2006-328
Allan S. Nicol, FGS-2006-254
Gaile P. Noble, FGS-2006-173
David E. Nordstrom, FGS-2006-356
North Coast Steelhead Alliance, Greg Knox, FGS-2006-227
Northern Family Health Society, Tricia Turner, FGS-2006-320
Clive V. Nylander, FGS-2006-255
Ellie O'Day, FGS-2006-183
Eira Olausen, FGS-2006-374
Juan Oudechea, FGS-2006-378
Howard Overend, FGS-2006-396
Leonard H. Pakulak, FGS-2006-324
Parent Support Group for Families of Mentally Handicapped Adults Society, Gwen Lee, Janice Reithofer, FGS-2006-199
Colin Park, FGS-2006-310
Roger A. Parke, FGS-2006-52
Noel Parker-Jervis, FGS-2006-3
John Parks, FGS-2006-22
Heather Parsons, FGS-2006-387
Margaret Pearson, FGS-2006-24
Elsiena Pel, FGS-2006-239
Viola E. Peskett, FGS-2006-370
Denny Petrik, FGS-2006-201
Doug Pierik, FGS-2006-193
Prince George Council of Seniors, Bev Christensen, FGS-2006-400
Prince George Hospice Society, Donalda Carson, Anne Mackenzie, FGS-2006-233
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Frank Prouten, FGS-2006-114
Public Dreams Society, Helena Campbell, FGS-2006-217
Allan Pudwell, FGS-2006-48
Quesnel Women's Resource Centre, Maureen Trotter, FGS-2006-203
S. W. Rabkin, FGS-2006-2
Dr. Gary Randhawa, FGS-2006-13

Dr. Darlene Redenbach, FGS-2006-139
Lawrence Redfern, FGS-2006-398
Stephen Rees, FGS-2006-125
Janice Reithofer, FGS-2006-371
Retail Council of Canada, Kevin Evans, FGS-2006-279
Maurice A Rhodes, FGS-2006-28
Ray Richards, FGS-2006-376
Gale Richet, FGS-2006-283
Alex Richmond, FGS-2006-351
Hildegard Richter, FGS-2006-212
Ann Robertson, FGS-2006-7
Bill Robertson, FGS-2006-122
Robyn Robinson, FGS-2006-134
Scott Robinson, FGS-2006-87
Anne Rodriguez, FGS-2006-344
Bernice Rolls, FGS-2006-275
Aneta Rondon, FGS-2006-385
S. Ross, FGS-2006-80
Stephen Ross, FGS-2006-246
Rotary Hospice House, Marg Wright, FGS-2006-71
Brian H. Ruddell, FGS-2006-127
Elizabeth A. Russell, FGS-2006-138
Priscilla Russell, FGS-2006-74
Ron Russell, FGS-2006-75
Brian Edward Ryder, FGS-2006-403
Peter R. W. Sanders, FGS-2006-128
Helen Saunders, FGS-2006-243
Brenda Schmidt, FGS-2006-353
Ernie Schmidt, FGS-2006-272
School District No. 63 (Saanich), MaryLynne Rimer, FGS-2006-249
School District No. 73 (Kamloops/Thompson), John Harwood, FGS-2006-296
School District No. 82 (Coast Mountains), Tom MacLean, FGS-2006-360
Andrew Schulz, FGS-2006-317
Bert & Regina Schulz, FGS-2006-363
E.M. (Bunny) Shannon, FGS-2006-208
Share Cariboo/Chilcotin Resources, G.W. (Bill) Carruthers, FGS-2006-17
R. H. Sheppard, FGS-2006-336
Peter & Joyce Short, FGS-2006-108
Shuswap Hospice Society, Jennifer Pring, FGS-2006-85
T. A. Simons, FGS-2006-192
Steven Sintich, FGS-2006-264
Dubravka and Emin Skrijelj, FGS-2006-83
Carol L. Skuta, FGS-2006-68
Denise Smekal, FGS-2006-372
Dr. Francois Smit, FGS-2006-215
Shirley Smith, FGS-2006-54
Rick Sommer, FGS-2006-297
Eric Sommerfeld, FGS-2006-276
Larry Sorken, FGS-2006-133
Ary Spaans, FGS-2006-57
Evelyn L. Spencer, FGS-2006-160
Colette Squires, FGS-2006-305
Linda Stacey, FGS-2006-265
Harold Stannus, FGS-2006-269
Diana Stefanita, FGS-2006-384
Sara J. Steil, FGS-2006-251
David Stern, FGS-2006-77
Nancy Stevens, FGS-2006-120
David Stevenson, FGS-2006-81
Marianne Stewart, FGS-2006-299
Sandra Stinner, FGS-2006-260
R. & H. Storey, FGS-2006-343
Barbara Strohbach, FGS-2006-118
Robert Struthers, FGS-2006-121
Harry Sukkau, FGS-2006-185
Sunshine Coast Hospice Society, Grant Thompson, FGS-2006-367
Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services, Bruce Parisian, FGS-2006-308
Philip E.K. Symons, FGS-2006-258
Alison Szanto, FGS-2006-33
Harpreet Takhar, FGS-2006-329
Betty Therriault, FGS-2006-298
Diane Therriault, FGS-2006-216
Danielle Thibeault, FGS-2006-354
Fran Thompson, FGS-2006-313
Richard Thompson, FGS-2006-100
Kathy Thomson, FGS-2006-238
Trudy Thorgeirson, FGS-2006-27
Cecil Thornewell, FGS-2006-26
Sandra Tilliyer, FGS-2006-377
Melodie Tomiyama, FGS-2006-252
Tri-City Womens Resource Society, Carol Metz Murray, FGS-2006-289
Pastor Jim Tustin, FGS-2006-90
Josie Tyabji, FGS-2006-42
James Underhill, FGS-2006-242
Norman Unrau, FGS-2006-194
John C. Van Beek, FGS-2006-47
Charles van de Kamp, FGS-2006-89
James W. Van Loan, FGS-2006-355
W. W. J. VanOene, FGS-2006-76
Amanda Vaughan, FGS-2006-401
Celine Verdoucq, FGS-2006-345
Paul Vezina, FGS-2006-88
Harry Vogt, FGS-2006-196
Ferdinand Vondruska, FGS-2006-55
Anna Wagner, FGS-2006-368
Wayne Wagstaff, FGS-2006-93
Christine Adaline Walsh, FGS-2006-392
Nancy Walton, FGS-2006-92
Don Warren, FGS-2006-236
Jon Washburn, FGS-2006-174
Thomas M. Waterland, FGS-2006-136
Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Gwen Barlee, FGS-2006-362
Joe and Marie Whitney, FGS-2006-154
Wayne Wikman, FGS-2006-65
Patricia Wilfert, FGS-2006-319
Susan Wilkinson, FGS-2006-244
Pauline Wong, FGS-2006-30
Harry Wright, FGS-2006-394
Norm Wright, FGS-2006-11
Samual Nirabadhi Wyatt, FGS-2006-186
John Yano, FGS-2006-240
Reika Yokota, FGS-2006-382
Jackie Zhuang, FGS-2006-352

# Appendix E: On-Line Responses

Tor Aamodt
Frank Abbott
Lorna Abbott
Geoffrey Abear
Greg Abell
Peter Ablitt
Michael Abraniuk
Shirley Abraniuk
Diane Abu Salim
Grace Aburto
Porfirio Aburto
Tim Achtemichuk
David Ackermann
Peter Ackhurst
John Adam
Miles Adam
Rudolf Adam
Dawn Adams
Donald Adams
Francis Adams
Lloyd Adams
Patricia Adams
Sharon Adams
Dinesh Adithan
Robert Adria
Matthew Aequitus
Megan Agnello
Richard Aikema
Vivian Aikins
Geoffrey Ainsworth
Don Albanese
Alfred Albrecht
Rigg Alex
Jeff Alexander, Vancouver Symphony Society
Ron Alexander
Paul Alexandrescu
Aleco Alexiadis
Norman Alexis
Rachel Alflatt
Michelle Alger
Manal Al-Ghosain
Faizal Alimohamed
Alaine Alington
Vafa Alizadeh
Roy Allan
Charles Allen
Martin F. Allen
Ruslana Allen
Suzen Allen
Anne Allgaier
David Allinger
Laurence Allington
Ron Aloni
Mike Alsop
Miguel Alvarez
Santiago Alvarez
Christine Ambrose
Jeanne Ambrose
M. Sarah Amos
Spiros Analytis
Cecile Anctil
Ann Andersen
Katie Andersen
Barbara Anderson
Charles Anderson
Clifford Anderson
Doug Anderson
Gary Anderson
Grant Anderson
Ian T Anderson
Jennifer Ellen Anderson
Ken Anderson
Kenneth Anderson
Keri Anderson
Martin Anderson
Mike Anderson
Necole Anderson
Rochelle Anderson
Ruth Anderson
Siobhan Anderson
Steve Anderson
Vel Anderson
Cam Andres
Peter R. Andres
Don Andrew
Keith Andrew
Phil Andrew
Margaret W. Andrews
Evelyn Andrews-Greene
Claus Andrup
Alan Ansell
Gordon Antenbring
Vanessa Anton
Pamela Antonovs
Len Appel
Trent Appelbe
Debra Apperley
Doreen Aquino
Shauna Aranas
Greg Arbouw
Timothy Ardenne
Chris Argent
Angus Argyle
David Arland
Andrea Armstrong
Jim Armstrong
Lesa Armstrong
Maxine Armstrong
Tim Armstrong
Ana-Elisa Armstrong De Almeida
Colin Arneld
Melanie Arnis
Frank Arnold
Linda Arnold
Jane Arnott
Jennifer Arrance
Sibylle Artz
Robert Ascroft
Mary Ashley
Dave Ashton
Jenny Ashton
Michael Ashton
Richard Ashton
Dave Ashworth
Hugh Ashworth
Theresa Aspol, Greater Victoria Citizen Advocacy Society
Catherine Asselin
Claire Aston
Henry Atkinson
Keith Atkinson
Morris Atkinson
Tom Atkinson
Brian Atmore
Bill/Jane Attwood
Jeanette Aubin
D. Auzins
Lorne Avery
Jen Aviss
Gili Avrahami
S. Aylen
Charles Ayotte
Hanna Aziz
Malak Aziz
Peter Aziz
Andrea Backman Galasso
Jewel Bacon
Lois Badenhorst
Vic Badenhorst
E. Badesso
L. Badesso
Eduardo Baena
Gordon Bagan
Bill Bailey
Lance Bailey
Stuart Baines
Paul Bains
Bruce Baird
Duncan Baird
Emma Baker
John L Baker
Keith Baker
Paul and Bonnie Baker
Tony Baker
Onno Bakhoven
Shirley Bakker
Bob Balbirnie
Glenn Balderston
Karen Baldock
Althea Baldwin
Laurel Baldwin
Roy Ball
Russell Ball
Sabina Ball
Ted Ball
James Ballard
Larry Ballash
Leslie Ballentine
Michael Balser
George Balzer
Michael Balzer
Wayne Balzer
Stephen Bamford
Howard Bampfield
Hugh Bankes
Sandie Banni
Ted Bannister
Dan Banov
Allison Barber
Catherine Barber
Patricia Barbetta
Thierry Barbier
Dene Barbondy
Dorothy Barbour
Ann Barclay
Chris Bard
Kathryn Barker
Bruce Barlow
Cameron Barnard
Colin Barnes
Elaine Barnes
James Barnes
Donna Barnett
Susan Barnett
Thomas Barnett
Jacqueline Baron
Janice Barr
Leigh Barratt
Tim Barrell
Jane Barry
Richard Barry
Gordon Barthels
Wendy Bartholomew
Robert Bartlett
Adriana Barton
Donna Barton
Robert Barton
Ronald Bartram
W.A. Bartsch
L.J. Bass
Ernie Bate
Jim Bates
Shirley Bates
John Batho
Natasha Batke
Jo Battensby
Irma Battista
Arnold Bauman
Edward Bauman
Sharon Baumbach
Jennifer Baumbusch
Gordon Bavis
Gary Baxendale
Don Baxter
Greg Bazian

Glen Beachy
Joanne Bealy
David Beamer
David Bean
Isabella Beane
Paul Beard
Barry Beardsell
Dr Ron Beaton
Terri Beaton
Leanne Beatty
Tyler Beatty
Nicole Beauchamp Rousseau
Adam Beaudin-Ball
Joan Beaudoin
Bryan Beaulieu
Rod Beaumont
Vincent Beauvais
Carl Beck
Edward Becker
Eileen Becker
Patricia Beckett
Richard Beever
Lynda Begg
Denis Begin
Louise Beinhauer
Mary Sheila Belanger
Stephen Belch
Bryan Belfont
Joan Belitsky
Darcy Bell
David Bell
Jacqueline Bell
John Bell
Mrs. M. Bell
Dawn Belliveau
Riordan Bellman
Ron Belton
Andrew Bendl
Morris Benetton
Leslie Benisz
Arnold Bennett
Barbara Bennett
Doug Bennett
Grace Bennett
Harold Bennett
Marilyn Bennett
Mark Bennett
Nicole Bennett
Simon Bennett
Walter Benson
Gaynor Bereza
John Bergenske
Isabelle Bergeron
Jeff & Bonnie Bergunder
Albert Berkshire
Neil Berman
B Bernamoff
Paul Bernard
Corrado Bernardi
Stuart Berry
Marie-Luise Berryman
Paul Berthoud
Glen Bertram
Robert Bertram
Robert Berze
Janette Beslievre
Theresa Bessette
Marie Best
Paul Bethel
Konstantin Bettenhausen
Sue Beugelink
Elizabeth Bey
Eleonore Beyer
Ken Beyer
Gunter Beyser
Harry Bezanson
Hari Bhatti
Mandeep Bhuller
Susan Bibbings
Woody Bieker
Kyllikki Bieker
Jennifer Bielewski
Galina Bieniada
Aaike Biglow
Tomas Bilina
Tim Binnema
Ronit Binyamini
Dean Biollo
Eresi Bira, L'Arche Greater Vancouver
J Birch
Margaret Birch
Edward Bird
Sonya Bird
Dean Birks
Joyce Birlew
Cheryl Bishop
Paul Bistritan
Carina Bittel
Kris Bittermann
James Bjerring
Barbara Black
Fiona Black
Rick Black
Sheri Black
Justin Blacklock
Barry Blackman
Joseph Blackman
Diane Blackwood
Patricia Blades
Ann Blagborne
Dave Blagdon
Bart Blainey
Debbi Blair
Ward Blair
Phil Blanchard
Cynthia Blank
Graham Blank
Marja Blase
Klaus Blassing
Andrea Bleasdale
Joan Bleiler
Arthur Block
Ernie Block
Paul Blomkvist
Jeff Bloom
Lori Blouin
Ben & Sandra Blyth
Don Blyth
Roselyn Boarman
Phil Boase
Doreen Bobbitt
Kristine Bodnark
Normande Bodo
Christine Boehringer
Co Boer
Hans Boerger
Jonathan Boettcher
Doreen Bogie
Doug Bohn
Rene & Shirley Boileau
Gordon Boisvert
Eduard Bokan
Maxine Bolen
Agnes Bolivar
Marc Bonder
Robert Bonderud
Kevin Bonell
Robert Bonenfant
Robert Boodle
Kirby Booker
Jeffrey Boone
Vic Booth
Erick Borglund
Daniel Borthwick
Ricardo Bortolon
Bert Bos
Giovanni Bosco
Dave Bosomworth
Greg Botten
Al Boucher
Conrad Boucher
David Boulding
Emma Bourassa
Ken Bourdeau
Bob Bourdon
Mark Bourgeau
Roger Bourque
Wayne Bourque
Carol Boutin
Bruce Bow
Joanne Bowden
Wendy Bowen
John Bowers
Joseph Bowes
Dan Bowles
John Bowron
M. Bowyer
Chris Boxall
Maxine Boxall
Peter Boyd
James Boyer
Melissa Boyer
Brock Boyle
Sarah Boyle
Geraldine Braak, Powell River Model Community Project For Persons With Disabilities
John Brackenbury
Lyndon Bradford
F Bradley
Maureen Bradley
Pat Bradley
Ronald Bradley
Garth Brady
Keran Braich
Jack Bramhill
Ena Brannan
Robert Branning
John Braunberger
Mieke Bray
Tim Breedveld
Erich Breitkreuz
Katrin Breitsprecher
John Bremner
Donna Brendon
Darcy Brennan
Shelagh Brennan
Loose Brenton
Natalie Brenton
Gerry Breukelman
Karen Breuker
David Brevner
Charles Brewster
Kenneth Bricker
Sarah Brickett
Gwen Bridge
Judith Bridgehall
Teresa Bridgeman
Warron Bridger
Jeremy Bright
Hedy Brindise
Brian Brinkac
Gerald Brise
Clifford Britch
Jonathan Broadberry
Karine Brochu
Ken Brock
William Brock
Win Bromley
Delmar Brooks
Jean Brooks
Pat Brooks
Rod Brooks
Arthur Broomhall
Carol Broomhall
Chris Brossard
Celeste Brosseau
Dave Brotherston
Robert Brough
Leanne Broughton
Becky Brown
Cameon Brown
Charles Brown
Cheryl Brown
Christine Brown

David Brown
Elaine Brown
Gerald Brown
Irene Brown, Surrey Association For Community Living
Jack Brown
Joyce Brown
K. Terry Brown, Sanctuary Family Care Services Inc.
Keith Brown
Lorrie Brown
Neil Brown
Regan Brown
Rodney Brown
Rosemary Brown
Vanessa Brown
Catherine Brownlow
Marion Bruce
Wayne Bruce
Robert Brucker
Hunter Brumell
Megan Brumovsky
Viktor Brumovsky
Brenda Brumwell
Patrick Bryant
Raymond Brydon
Laney Bryenton
Don Brynildsen
Allan Buch
William Buchan
Daphne Buchanan
Don Buchanan
Doug Buchanan
Glenn Buchanan
Louisa Buchanan
Madeline Buck
Peter Buckland
George Buckley
Abe Buhler
Clint Buhr
Jim N Buis
Bill Buitendyk
Harry Bull
Leona Bullett
Perry Bulwer
Tom Bundic
Sandra Bunnett
Iris Burch
William Burch
Richard Burchill
Simone Burchill, Prince George Hospice Society
Kim Burden
Marshall Burgess
Sarah Burgess
Valerie Burgess
Helmut Burke
Brian Burnet
Dean Burr
Roy Burrell
Alan Burris
William Burrough
Evelyn Burrows
Victor Burstall
Carla Burton
Jack Burton
Robert Burton
Walter & Beatriz Burton
Glenn Burwell
Karl Bury
John Bush
Gervase Bushe
Rosemary Buss
Brian Butler
Hayden Butler
Michael Butler
Rodney Butler
John Butterworth
Dorothy-Anne Byard
Neil Byers
Nicky Byres
Daniel Byrne
Karen Byrne
Sylvia Byron
Ken Byrt
Bruce Bystrom
Brit Cabral
Kerry Caceres
Nikolaos Cacos
Ian Caesar
William Cafferata
Barbara Cairns
James Calder
R Calderon
Eleanor Calderwood
Joan Calderwood
Michele Calla
John Callahan
Patrick Callahan
Kelly Cameron
Maggie Cameron
Maureen Cameron
Russ Cameron
Russell Cameron
Don Cameron, Sr.
Annnette Camillo-Amisano
Margaret Camp
Alex Campbell
Beth Campbell
Blair Campbell
Colleen Campbell
Daphne Campbell
Donald Campbell
Douglas Campbell
Karen Campbell
Linda Campbell
Rhonda Campbell
Richard Campbell
Ross Campbell
Stacy Campbell
Thomas Campbell
Warren Campbell
Chris Cant
Carolyn Canty
Robert Capar
Gerald Card
Kevin Cardinal
Kelvin Carey
D Carfrae
Marilyn Cargnelli
Khristine Carino
Margaret Carlin
Micah Carmody
Rob Carnegie
Grant Carnine
Edward Caron
Joan Carr
Sharon Carr
William Carr
Raul Carreras
Susan Carr-Hilton
Carla Carriere
Barbara Carroll
Elena Carroll
Judy Carruthers
Katrina Carruthers
Norman Carruthers
Bruce Carson
Cindy Carson
Pat Carson
Bert & Patricia Valerie Carswell
Krista Carter
Sally Carter
Stephen Carter
Ty Carter
Barry Carvish
Dave Cary
Edward Cashman
Julius Casimiro
D.N. Caskey
David Cassidy
Romano Castelli
Martha Castillo
Tanya Cathcart
Jason Cathers
Deb Caughy
Darrell Causey
Rob Cauvin
Marguerite Cawston
Wendy Cellik
Cathy Cena
Sam Cerracchio
Anemone Cerridwen
Alan Chabot
Grace Chabot
Kalbir Chahal
Carl Chalk
Sandi Chamberlain
Bruce Chambers
Bill Chan
Eugene Chan
Grace Chan
Irene Chan
Jose Chan
Raymond Chan
Raymond Chan
Rodney Chan
Sze Chak Chan
Teresa Chan
Tommy Chan
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Kelly Pederson, Fraserside Community Services Society
Ronald Peel
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Anita Sihota, Delta Community Living Services

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Dianne Turgeon, Quesnel Community Living Association
Byrne Turner
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Peter Tweedale
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Comunity Group
Greg Weitzel
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